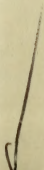


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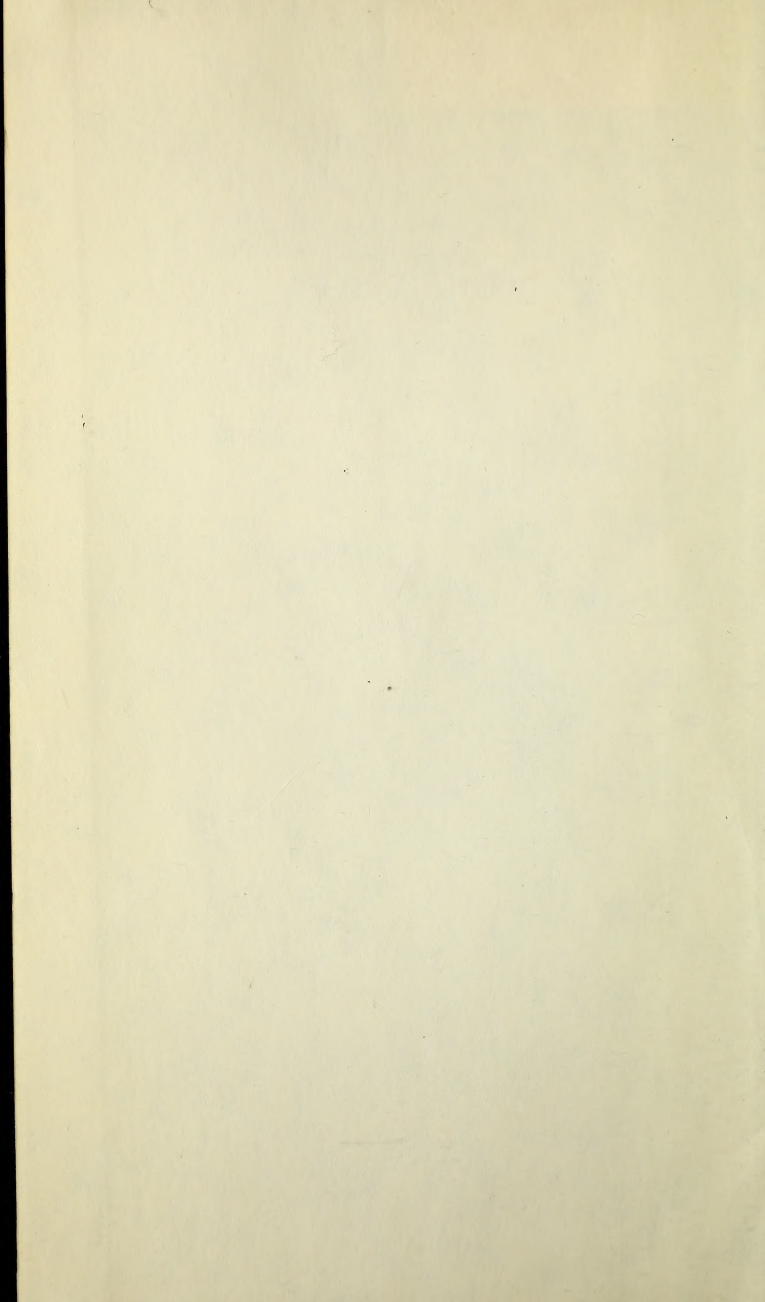


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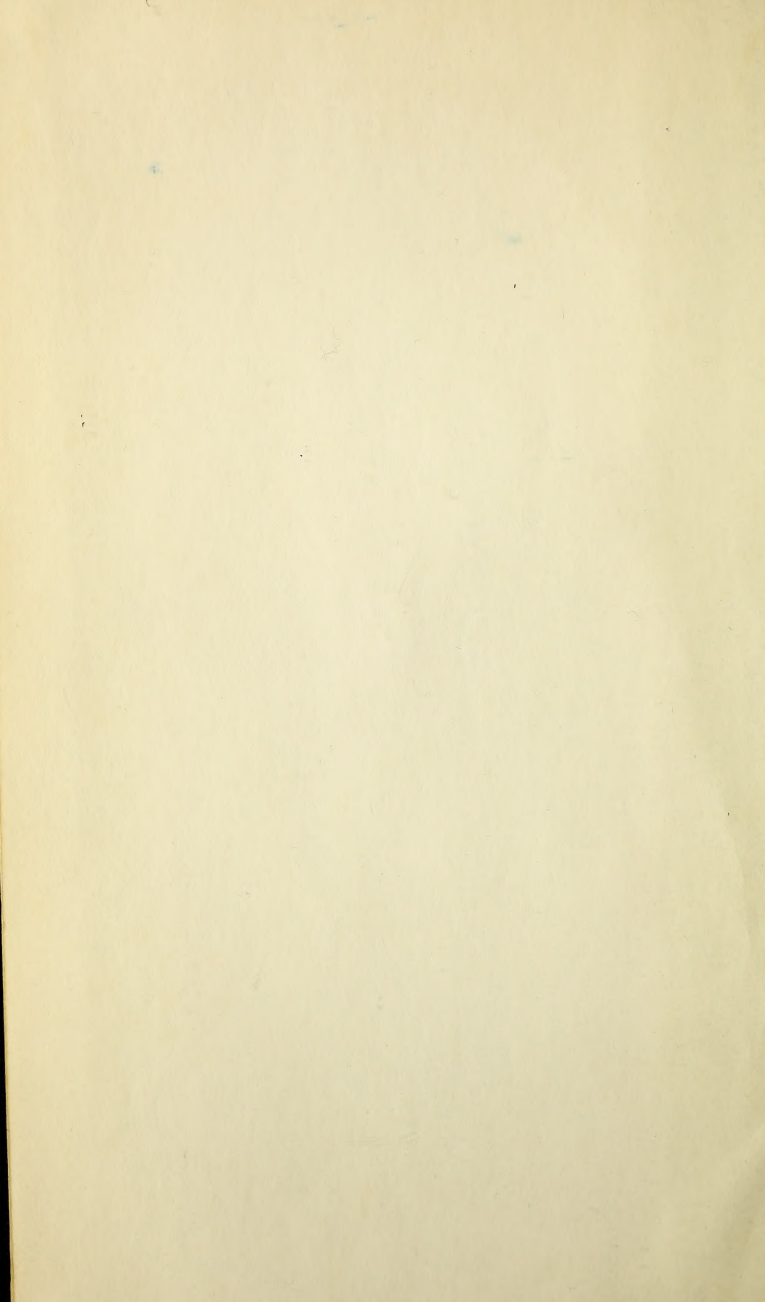
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A

HISTORY

OF THE

TOWN OF NORTON,

BRISTOL COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS.

FROM 1669 TO 1859.

BY

GEORGE FABER CLARK,

MEMBER OF THE OLD-COLONY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE NEW-ENGLAND .
HISTORIC-GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, AND MINISTER OF THE CONGREGATIONAL PARISH.

"Your fathers, where are they?" — ZECH. i. 5.

"Of these things put them in remembrance." — 2 TIM. ii. 14.

BOSTON:

CROSBY, NICHOLS, AND COMPANY,

117, WASHINGTON STREET;

AND THE AUTHOR AT NORTON.

1859.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1859, by

GEORGE FABER CLARK,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON AND SON,

22, SCHOOL STREET.

1158635

TO

All the Sons and Daughters of Norton,

NATIVE AND ADOPTED,

WITH THE HOPE THEY WILL BE AS INTERESTED IN READING ITS PAGES

AS HE HAS BEEN IN PREPARING IT FOR THEIR PERUSAL,

This History

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

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1850

P R E F A C E.

ON the 12th of November, 1854, the Sunday following the one hundred and fortieth anniversary of the organization of the Congregational Church in Norton, the author commenced, and continued on the succeeding Sunday, a series of four sermons upon the History of the town, and especially of the church of which he was the pastor. Dec. 16 of the same year, he received a written request from some of his leading parishioners, who had listened to the discourses, that he should publish them, together with such other historical facts as might be collected, in the form and manner he thought proper. He was also urged to do so by others, not members of his parish; and the result, after many delays and discouragements, is the book now before the reader. At one time, the town voted to subscribe for one hundred copies, but, at an adjourned meeting, reconsidered the vote. In the spring of 1858, a proposition was made to the citizens of Mansfield to give a history of that town in connection with Norton, without increasing the subscription price, provided they would take five hundred copies. The proposition was rejected by the town. Those who have cheered us on by the material aid promised, coming generations will thank as heartily as do we. For valuable assistance and suggestions, the author is indebted to Rev. J. B. Felt, and S. G. Drake, Esq., of Boston, and, above all, to his esteemed friend John L. Sibley, Librarian of Harvard College. A true history of any town or country should exhibit "the cloud" as well as the "silver lining;" but it is better perhaps, to let the mantle of charity and oblivion cover the errors and faults of the weak and misguided. The town-records contain but little material for a good history; and, for four years after the incorporation of Norton, the records are supposed to be lost. Hence

we have been obliged to search far and wide for many of the most interesting facts recorded in these pages. We have trusted but little to what was merely traditional. What is stated without qualification has been done on what was deemed good authority, and may generally be relied upon. In cases of doubt, a question-mark (?) immediately follows the statement. Great pains have been taken to have accuracy in dates, &c.; yet frequent errors will no doubt be found. As they peruse these pages, and their eye falls upon an error or misstatement, some will perhaps say, "We could have told the writer better than that." Our only reply is, Then you alone are responsible for the error, by withholding the intelligence you possessed; for we have, privately and publicly, called upon all to furnish what interesting facts and incidents were in their possession. No doubt, if all had been as ready to communicate as some will be to find fault, a more reliable book would have been made. Before a work of this kind is given to the public, proof-sheets should be placed in every family for them to mark all inaccuracies of statement, and errors in date: then something like a reliable history could be published. This is not, however, practicable in most cases, on account of expense. It may be thought we have been too minute in many respects, — that we have introduced too many documents entire, instead of giving an epitome of their contents. We have introduced these documents because they have been collected from a wide field, and only a single copy of them exists; which, of course, is liable to be destroyed. We have wished to preserve them for the benefit of the future historian; and, above all, we have desired to let them tell their own story in their own way. All are not interested in the same class of facts: we have, therefore, introduced quite a variety of topics; for we think whatever throws light upon the manners and customs of our ancestors is worthy of record. We have written for the future as well as the present. Hence, upon some topics, what may be called prolixity now may be considered paucity hereafter. Except in two or three instances, we have given the dates as we found them on the records. The names in extracts are spelled as there found, because we could not always obtain the correct orthography, and members of the same family frequently spell their names differently. We have also, in extracts, till within quite a recent date, followed the spelling in other particulars. This will explain to some what will seem typographical errors.

That part of a lady's name in parentheses indicates her surname before marriage. When we issued our subscription-paper, May 1, 1855, we supposed the book would go to press in about fifteen months. But, in the attempt to carry out that plan, our eyes (which had been weak for years) became so affected in the autumn of 1856, that all labor upon the book was suspended for several months; and, since it was resumed, we have been able to work but a small portion of the time upon it. Our readers will, however, find that "patient waiting is no loss;" for, since 1856, we have collected many interesting facts which we could not have given had we gone to press as originally intended. The biographical notices have been confined to those who have in some way been prominent before the public, in church, state, or profession. There were others, we presume, whose talents and moral worth furnish as great a claim upon our attention; but we could not go beyond certain limits in this department. The same remarks will apply to the portraits, all but two of which were engraved expressly for us; and they were furnished, with the exceptions hereafter named, by the individuals they represent, or their friends. Those of George Leonard, and George Leonard, jun. (except ten dollars given by Hon. William Baylies,* of West Bridgewater), were paid for, at our request, by the proceeds of a dramatic exhibition, given by the children of our common schools, in the Town Hall, May 13 and 14, 1857. The plate of Dr. Wilmarth, made for his "Memoirs," has been kindly loaned me to take impressions from by his only son, Jerome Wilmarth, of Hopedale. That of Edwin Barrows was made for another purpose, and, at our earnest solicitation, was furnished. For his own engraving, the author is indebted to the ladies of his parish, who also paid for the picture of the church. During our labors, we have been repeatedly urged by antiquarian friends to make a register of the families in town. We could not do this without doubling the size of the book, or making two volumes. For various reasons, we have not attempted it; but such a register can be made at any future day, for there is abundant material. It would be an invaluable record. Should circumstances be favor-

* No other person, of those who inherited the vast estate of the Leonard Family from Mrs. Bowen, could be induced to give any thing towards these engravings.

able, and sufficient inducement be given, the author might undertake the task. But, like this, it would be a labor of love; yea, a loss out of his pocket, which he is not anxious to incur. Without further preliminaries, we present to our readers the fruits of our toil, with the hope that they will deem a sufficient excuse for all imperfections the fact that the work has been written amidst a multitude of professional and other duties, and almost without eyes.

G. F. CLARK.

NORTON, June 17, 1859.

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OLD AND NEW STYLE.

It was very common between Jan. 1 and March 25, for many years previous to 1752, to make double dates, as it is called (as, for instance, on p. 3, "March 8, 1681-2"); and we have followed the records in this respect. Before 1752, when New Style was introduced, March 25 was considered the commencement of the civil year, and it was called the first month, April the second month, &c.; and dates were sometimes written in this manner: viz., 15—10—1668-9; which would mean the 15th of 10th month, 1668-9, or Jan. 25, 1669, New Style. In order to change Old into New Style, the first month must be called the third, and so on, and ten days be added to all dates between 1582 and 1699, and eleven days added to all dates between 1699 and 1752. Hence the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth was really on the 21st of December; and not on the 22d, as most of us were taught in our childhood.

E R R A T A.

Page	36,	line	8	from	top,	for	"Tawnton"	read	"Taunton."
"	36,	"	20	"	"	"	"Excercise"	"	"Exercise."
"	60,	"	3	"	"	"	"Barrow's"	"	"Barrows's."
"	70,	"	11	"	bottom,	"	"Greenward"	"	"Greenwood."
"	89,	"	16	"	top,	"	"1750"	"	"1758."
"	160,	"	22	"	"	"	"Rounds"	"	"Round."
"	205,	"	14	"	"	"	"Messenger"	"	"Messinger."

The author would thank any one who may notice any other errors to make them known to him, as he will keep an interleaved copy of the book in which to note all inaccuracies for the benefit of coming generations.

GENERAL INDEX.

WE had intended to have given an index to every name on every page in the book; but some names — viz., Leonard, Lincoln, Lane, Briggs, Hodges, Smith, White, Williams, Wetherell, and others — occur so frequently, that it would encumber the Index too much. Some names that have occurred only incidentally, and having no particular connection with the town, we have omitted entirely.

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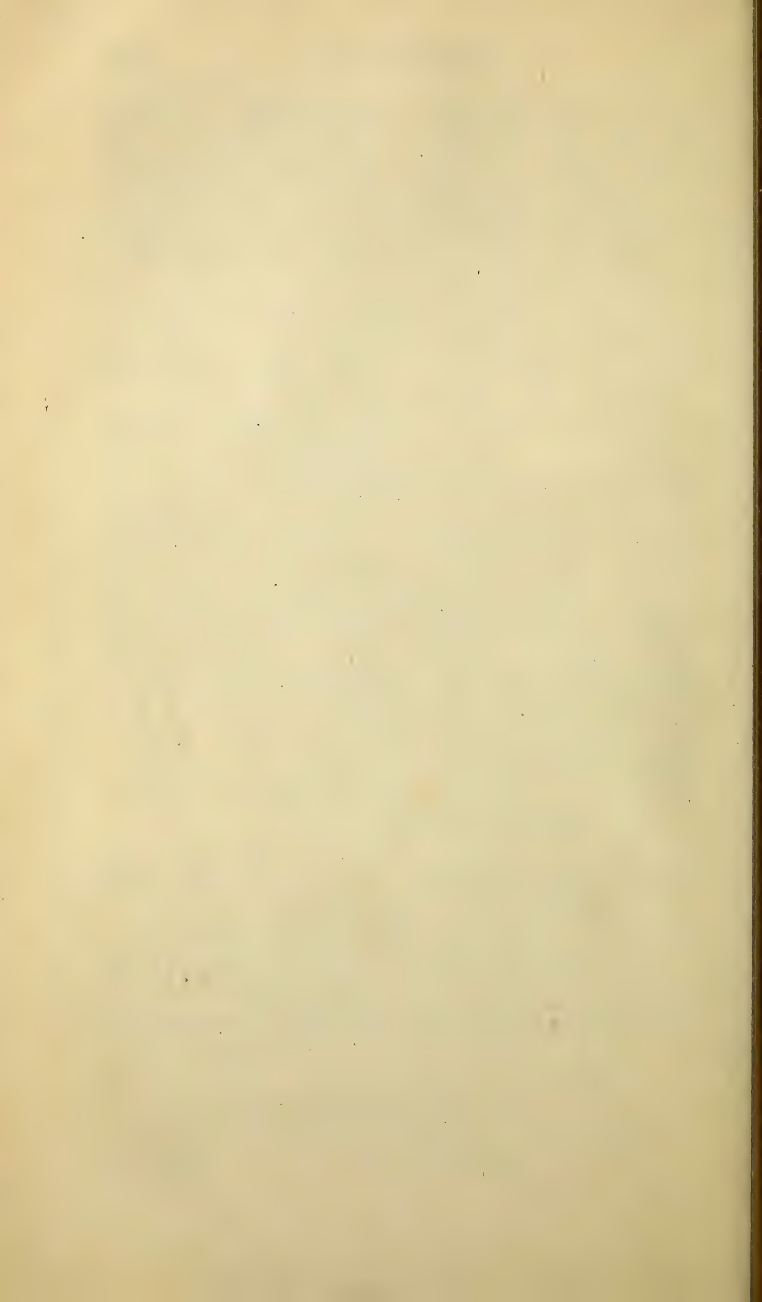
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HISTORY OF NORTON, MASS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

"When wild in woods the noble savage ran." — DRYDEN.

ABOUT the year 1637, Henry Uxley, Richard Williams, Joseph Wilson, Benjamin Wilson, William Coy, George Hall, David Corwithy, Mr. William Pool, George Macy, William Harvey, Hezekiah Hoar, Walter Dean, John Dean, John Strong, Henry Andrews, Thomas Cooke, John Smith, Mr. Thomas Farwell, Edward Case, John Kingsley, Richard Paull, Richard Smith, Mr. John Gilbert, William Phillips, William Hailstone, William Parker, John Parker, John Richmond, William Holloway, the Widow Randall, Francis Doty, William Dunn, William Scadding, John Bryant, Anthony Slocum, John Gengille, Francis Street, Hugh Rossiter, John Gilbert, Thomas Gilbert, Robert Hobell, Richard Burt, John Crossman, John Luther, John Drake, and Mr. John Brown,¹ purchased of the Plymouth Colony a tract of land, at a place called Cohannett, which soon after took the name of Taunton.

By order of the court, the bounds around this first purchase (sometimes called the Tetiquet Purchase, to distinguish it from subsequent purchases) were made on the 19th of June, 1640, by Miles Standish

¹ Baylies's Memoir of Plymouth Colony, part i. p. 286.

and John Browne. This tract of land was laid out in "a long square,"¹ measuring eight miles on a side. It was doubtless in the form of a diamond, or rhombus, the northerly angle of which extended to within about two miles of the line between the Plymouth and Massachusetts Colonies, now the line between Bristol and Plymouth Counties, and is known to this day as "Cobbler's Corner."² It included within its limits portions of the present towns of Mansfield, Norton, Raynham, Berkley, and Taunton.

In 1641, the township of Rehoboth, westerly of Taunton, was purchased by Walter Palmer and others.

In 1649, Bridgewater, easterly of Taunton, and extending northerly to the line between the two Colonies, was bought by Miles Standish and others.

In 1666, the territory north of Rehoboth (now Attleborough), and extending to the line between the two Colonies, was sold to the town of Rehoboth, and was called Rehoboth North Purchase. There was then between Attleborough and Bridgewater, and between Taunton and the line of the two Colonies, an irregular-shaped tract of land, about twelve miles long on the northerly side, seven and a half miles wide on the westerly end, and a little less than that on the easterly end. Into this the northerly angle of Taunton projected some five miles. This as yet nameless tract of land contained an area of about fifty square miles.

After additions had been made to the original purchases of Rehoboth and Bridgewater, Taunton people, no doubt, thought it proper that their town should be enlarged. Accordingly, a company was formed, and this irregular-shaped piece of land on the north was purchased the sixth day of June,³ 1668, of Thomas

¹ For bounds, see Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. ii. pp. 99, 100.

² It is said to have been so called from the fact, that in making the bounds, when Miles Standish and his men came to this corner, one of them mended or "cobbled" his shoes.

³ See Records of Deeds in Plymouth County, vol. iii. p. 118; also North-Purchase Records, p. 1.

Prence, Josias Winslow, Thomas Southworth, and Constant Southworth ("the country's agents"), by Richard Williams, Walter Dean, George Macey, James Walker, Joseph Wilbor, William Harvey, Thomas Leonard, John Turner, Henry Andrews, John Cob, George Hall, John Hall, Samuella Hall, James Leonard, sen., Nathaniell Williams, Thomas Williams, Nicholas White, sen., Nicholas White, jun., Hezekiah Hore, Allice Dean, Israell Dean, Robert Crossman, Shadrack Wilbor, Thomas Caswell, John Macomber, John Smith, Edward Rew, John Parker, Samuella Paule, Thomas Lincoln, sen., Thomas Harvey, sen., Nathaniell Thayre, Thomas Lincoln, jun., Peter Pits, Jonah Austin, sen., John Richmond, Samuella Williams, Christopher Thrasher, Mrs. Jane Gilbert, George Watson, Samuella Smith, James Burt, Richard Burt, John Tisdell, sen., John Tisdell, jun., James Phillips, Edward Bobbot, John Hathway, Jonathan Briggs, Increase Robinson, John Briant, Thomas Harvey, jun.; and was called "Taunton North Purchase."

"March 8, 1681-2. — By order of ye Court, Mr. George Shove his name was afixed to the sd. deed as a proprietor."¹

The bounds of this purchase, as given in the deed, are these: "Begining on the north-west, att the bounds of the lands formerly sold by us unto the Town of Rehoboth, and to be bounded on the northerly syde by the Massachusetts line, untill it cometh to beare with the Western bounds of the Town of Bridgewater; and soe from the said Massachusetts line by a south line home to the bounds of Taunton, and thence by a Westerly line untill it meets with the bounds of Rehoboth aforesaid; and so to follow the said bounds of Rehoboth untill it comes unto the bounds first mentioned upon the Massachusetts line; all the lands within this compas, excepting onely a small parcel granted unto John Bunday, and alsoe a grant made unto Thomas Briggs, the son of Clement Briggs, together with the meddows,

¹ North-Purchase Records, p. 1.

woods, waters, and other benefitts, privileges, emoluments, proffitts, and emunities thereto appertaining and belonging.”¹

The price paid for this tract of land was “the full sume of one hundred pounds.” The northerly line of this territory, bordering upon the ancient limits of Dorchester, was the scene of many vexatious disputes.

Both the Plymouth and Massachusetts Colonies laid claim to a gore of land, extending from Accord Pond (on the borders of Hingham, Abington, and Scituate), some twenty-five miles, to Rhode-Island line, and containing more than “fourteen thousand acres,” as it appears from a plan of this disputed territory which I have found, and which bears evident marks of age. This line was not definitely settled till 1773.² Dec. 3, 1717, the North-Purchase proprietors raised a committee “to see into that matter concerning the runing

¹ The land of John Bundy was in what is now Easton, and is supposed to have been granted to him by the government, in consequence of his being one of the first children born in the Colony. It is very probable that he was the first settler within the limits of that town. Of him not much is known. He is supposed to be the same person who, on the 14th of March, 1635, was apprenticed to “Griffin Mountegue, carpenter, in New England,” for eight years; and who, after the lapse of two years, agreed to serve out the residue of his time with Elder William Brewster.* While with Mr. Brewster, he was “found guilty of lude behavior and vnciuill carriage towards Elizabeth Haybell,” and was “seuerly whiped” for so doing.† In 1638, Bundy was transferred from the service of Elder Brewster to his son Jonathan, for the remaining time of five years. In 1645, he was one of a squad of soldiers sent from Plymouth against the Narragansett Indians, &c.‡ His first wife’s name was Martha —. She died May 1, 1674. By her he had four, and perhaps more, children: viz., James, b. 29th of September, 1664; Sarah, b. 4th March, 1668; Samuel, b. 4th October, 1670; and Patience, who died 27th March, 1665. He m., for second wife, Ruth Gurney (?), of Mendon, Jan. 9, 1676; and by her had John, b. 6th October, 1677; Joseph, b. 1st January, 1679; and Edward, b. 13th August, 1681. This is all that is known of him; except, it is stated in Baylies’s Memoir, part ii. p. 274, that he “removed to Point Judith, Narragansett.”

Of Thomas Briggs, we know but little aside from his parentage. His land, consisting of a hundred and fifty acres, and twenty acres of meadow, was granted to him in 1659, “in the way to Deadum from Taunton, betwixt a pond and the mill-riuer which comes to Taunton betwixt Taunton and Massapauge Pond.”§ This was probably in the north-easterly part of Mansfield, or the north-westerly part of Easton.

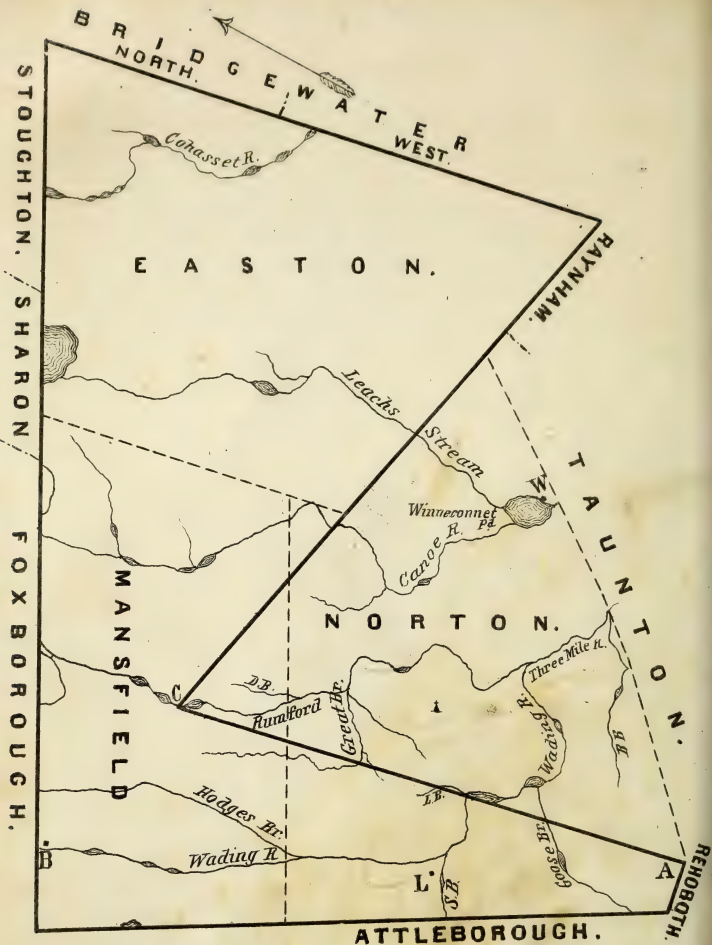
² For more particulars relative to the line between the Colonies, see Hobart’s Sketch of Abington, p. 95, &c.

* Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. i. p. 51.

‡ Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. ii. p. 90.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 65.

§ Ibid. vol. iii. p. 164.



MAP OF TAUNTON NORTH PURCHASE AND THE TOWNS OF NORTON, EASTON AND MANSFIELD.

EXPLANATIONS

- Bounds of North Purchase.
- - - Bounds of Towns.
- i Cong. Parish Church of Norton.

of the line by Dorchester men, and how much there is taken out of any man's particular propriety ;" and a former committee were empowered "to make satisfaction to those that are damnified by the running of the line by Dorchester men."¹ The Punkapoag Indians, who lived in the neighborhood of Blue Hill, also claimed a portion of the territory ; and hence, Feb. 24, 1686 or 7, the North-Purchase proprietors "voted to levy and raise sixteen pence in money on each share in said Purchase, to pay Josiah, the Indian sachem,² for a deed they have procured of him."³

The town of Norton, whose history we are to record in the following pages, as originally constituted, comprised the whole of the North Purchase, together with the northerly angle of the original or Tetiquet Purchase of Taunton.

On the opposite page we give a diminutive map of Taunton North Purchase, and the town of Norton as originally constituted, with its subdivisions, Easton and Mansfield.

The dark, heavy lines show the boundaries of the North Purchase. It will be seen that Norton, as now bounded, comprises only a portion of the westerly end of the North Purchase, with a little triangular tract of land at the north-easterly corner of the town. Most of Mansfield is included in the North Purchase, and all of Easton.

The two bounds of North Purchase that meet at C, near the centre of Mansfield, form Cobbler's Corner, which is west of Rumford River, and a short distance below the road leading from the four corners by M. Allen's, in Mansfield, to Isaac Skinner's. The angle *within* the lines meeting at C (Cobbler's Corner) is a portion of the old town, or the original purchase of Taunton. The North-Purchase line, running from A (which is a corner of Taunton, Rehoboth, and Norton,

¹ North-Purchase Records, p. 48.

² This was probably Charles Josias. See chapter on Indians.

³ North-Purchase Records, p. 10.

and known on the old records as Abel's Corner) to Cobbler's Corner, passes along directly in front of Allen D. Lane's house and the school-house in No. 4, across the upper end of Barrowsville Factory Pond, easterly of the common burying-ground, and within a few feet of the westerly end of Austin Messinger's old house. The line from Cobbler's Corner to the south-eastern corner of Easton passes between Nathaniel Newcomb's house and factory.

It will be seen by the map, that Easton is bounded on three sides by the North-Purchase bounds, Mansfield on two sides, and Norton wholly on only one side by the same.

Other portions of the map will be explained in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS.

"Across the flood the Pilgrims fled,
And Heaven their trusting footsteps led,
Till on these savage shores they trod,
And won the wilderness for God."

H. WARE, Jun.

THE first settlement within the present limits of Norton is believed to have been made by William Wetherell in 1669, on the easterly side of Winneconnet Pond, about twenty rods northerly from the bridge, over the outlet of this pond, which marks the bounds between the present towns of Taunton and Norton.¹

¹ From his will, made just before his death in 1691, it appears that Mr. Wetherell's dwelling-house then stood "on the south side of the pond;" and it is possible that there was where his first habitation was "pitched," though we think the weight of evidence is decidedly in favor of the east side of the pond. In 1690, he deeded to his son William a portion of his land on the easterly side of the pond, including what we supposed to have been the site of the first house; and it is presumed that this deed was given about the time he moved to the spot where he died. Possibly, during

By an examination of the Proprietors' Records of the Old Town of Taunton (p. 50), I find that, on the 29th of April, 1669, William Wetherell sold several parcels of land situated on and near Mill River (which is the stream that runs out of Winneconnet Pond); and included in this sale were "five accres, more or less, which was granted to him by the town for a home-lotte." And on the same day was laid out to him, in four lots, about sixty acres of land on the easterly and northerly side of the pond; and the bounds of these lots can be pretty generally identified at the present time. Hence we think, in the absence of all testimony to the contrary, that in the spring of 1669, and on the east side of the pond, only a few rods from the meadow, was erected the first habitation in our town.

Tradition says that this William Wetherell — whose name will ever be a household word to the people of Norton — came from England, in the capacity of a cabin-boy, with William Dunn, the master of the vessel, and one of the original proprietors of Taunton, who is said to have soon returned to England, leaving his cabin-boy in charge of his proprietary, with the understanding, that, if he (Dunn) did not return to claim it, the right should escheat to young Wetherell; and such was the result. Of the exact time Capt. Dunn arrived in America, we have no reliable account:¹ it might

King Philip's war in 1675 and 6, Mr. Wetherell left his dwelling unoccupied, on account of its exposed situation, and placed his family in one of the garrisoned houses for safety; and when the war was ended, his house having probably been destroyed by the Indians, he might have gone to the southerly side of the pond, or, more properly, to the south-westerly side, and erected his house there. It is well known that Mr. Wetherell himself was engaged in Philip's war. From his will, it appears that another house stood near where he lived. Our oldest men remember that two houses once stood on the south-westerly side of the pond; and traces of both can be seen at the present day. Yet from the fact, that, in 1685, he was licensed to keep a sort of public-house, we are strongly of the opinion that he then lived on the east side of the pond, and left in 1690, when he deeded the homestead to his son William.

¹ On the gravestone of James Wetherell, who died in 1837, it is stated that he was the "great-grandson of Mr. William Wetherell, the first of the name that came to America." This, we think, is an error. Rev. William

have been just before the settlement of Taunton, and he might have brought over in his vessel many of the first settlers of the town; and, as most of these were from the vicinity of Taunton in England, it is possible that the birthplace of Wetherell was in that neighborhood. All this is, however, mere conjecture. The first reliable evidence we have of William Wetherell being in Taunton is in 1643, when his name appears on a list of males, between the ages of sixteen and sixty, subject to military duty.¹ He was one of the inhabitants of Taunton, who, on the 28th of December, 1659, had a division of land made in the proportion of two acres on each shilling of the rate paid by the individual, two acres on each head in the family, and two acres to the lot. Mr. Wetherell's rate was seven shillings and tenpence; and there were five heads in his family (supposed to be himself, wife, and three children); and twenty-eight acres of land were assigned him. His wife's name was Dorothy —. When they were married is uncertain: but it is supposed to have been about 1650; for, in 1672, William Wetherell, and William Wetherell, jun. (supposed to be his son), were among the proprietors of the South Purchase of Taunton, including what is now Dighton and a portion of Berkley.

He was admitted a freeman at the Plymouth Court in June, 1658.² June 6, 1664, William Wetherell and three others, of Taunton, were fined "twenty shil-

Wetherell, of Duxbury, and afterwards the minister of Scituate, arrived in America in 1634.* There was also a John Wetherell at Cambridge in 1635, who was afterwards a proprietor of Watertown:† he was, probably, the brother of Rev. William Wetherell. What connection, if any, our William Wetherell was to Rev. William, of Scituate, we know not: he might have been a nephew. The orthography of the name is various: the first settler here wrote it Wetherel, his son William wrote it Wetherell, and his son Jeremiah had it Wetherel. On old records it is spelled Witherel, Witherell, Wetherel, Wetherell, Wethrell, Witherly, Wetherly, &c. The name is now generally spelled Wetherell; and we shall so write it.

¹ Baylies's Memoir, part ii. p. 267.

² Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. iii. p. 137.

* Winsor's History of Duxbury. See also Dean's History of Scituate.

† See Farmer's Register of First Settlers in New England.

lings for an abuse done to a sawmill att Taunton, belonging to James Walker and others, by coming in the night and breaking downe some parte of the said mill, and for takeing away sevuerall thinges from the same.”¹ It is presumed that this difficulty grew out of the fact, that the dam to this mill was so built as to prevent “the alewiues from goeing vp” the river, and hence was not legally built; for, on the same day that Wetherell and others were fined, the owners of the mill were required, before “the next season of the fishes goeing vp,” to make “a free, full, and sufficient passage for the said fish.”²

Just before the commencement of Philip’s war in 1675, a list of the proprietors of Taunton was made; and on this list is the name of William Wetherell, who owned “on his own rights and that which was Mr. Dunn’s.”³ His name appears several times on the Grand Inquest between 1650 and 1690. He was a constable in Taunton for the years 1662 and 1676. In 1671 and 1685, he was a “deputy,” or representative, from Taunton to the Plymouth-Colony Court. He was also a deputy at a special court held on the last day of October and first of November, 1676. In 1685, he was one of the selectmen. In 1671, he was one of a committee “appointed in each town to see to the gathering-in of the Minister’s Maintainance,” &c.⁴ In 1679–80, he was one of the court’s committee “to bound the meddowes on Assonett Necke.”⁵ June 2, 1685, he was licensed “to retaile cider, beeir, and strong liquors.”⁶ It is presumed, as he lived at this time on the road leading from Taunton to Boston, and known then and now as the “Bay Road,” that he kept a sort of “ordinary,” or victualling-house, for travellers; and hence he no doubt kept the first public-house within the limits

¹ Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. iv. p. 66.

² Ibid. vol. iv. p. 66.

³ Baylies’s Memoir, part ii. p. 278.

⁴ Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. v. p. 58.

⁵ Ibid. vol. vi. p. 31.

⁶ Ibid. vol. vi. p. 170.

of Norton. May 25, 1680, he was appointed one of a committee of the town "to revise the town-orders, records of land," &c.¹

Thus it will be seen that he was a man of some consequence, and possessed a good reputation among the early settlers of Taunton. From an old deed now in possession of our townsman (descendant of the first settler), William D. Wetherell, given by John Wetherell, son of William, to his son Jonathan, it appears that William Wetherell was an "Eldest Sergeant in Capt. Gorrom's (Gorham's) Company in the great Narragansett-Swamp fitt," which took place Dec. 19 (?), 1675; in the present town of South Kingston, R.I.; and that a grant of land was made by the court to the soldiers who were wounded in that ever-memorable battle. From the Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. vi. p. 119, it appears that "Sergt. Witherly" and "other Taunton men" came wounded to the house of Peleg Sanford, Dec. 24, 1675; and that he remained till Oct. 17, 1676. His wound must, therefore, have been of a pretty severe character, to have confined him almost a year before he was able to return home. It was in consequence of his wounds received in the battle of Narragansett Swamp, we presume, that the court granted Mr. Wetherell ten pounds in 1685, and five pounds in 1686.²

From all the facts that we can gather relating to Mr. Wetherell, he seems to have been a man blessed with a good share of worldly goods; holding two rights in the original purchase of Taunton (his own and Mr. Dunn's), one right in the South Purchase of Taunton, and, at the time of his death, half a right in the North Purchase. In the year 1690, he deeded most of his property to his children and grandchildren; and in his will, dated Aug. 15, 1691, and probated Nov. 18 of same year, he makes some little legacies to his children, and confirms the deeds he had previously

¹ Baylies's Memoir, part iv. p. 76.

² Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. vi. pp. 189 and 201.

given of his lands. He mentions in his will his sons William, John, and Ephraim (who was dead at the date of the will), and his daughter Dorothy Wood, who was the wife of William Wood (her second husband), to whom she was married April 1, 1686. Her first husband was Elias Irish; and they were married Aug. 26, 1674. He lived only about three years; for, in October, 1677, William Wetherell was appointed administrator of his estate.¹ Of the sons William and John we shall say something in connection with the early settlers. These few meagre items are all we have been able to gather relative to the first settler; but they are full of interest, and furnish abundant food for the imaginative mind.

We here give the only autograph known to be in existence of the first settler, written in 1690, the year before he died.

William Wetherell

In the course of a few years, a number of other settlers had made their "pitch" in the immediate neighborhood of the pond; doubtless from the fact that the land was of easy cultivation, and particularly adapted to the growth of Indian corn and other grains.

About the year 1685, Thomas Brintnell, with his family, made a settlement in the north-west part of what is now Mansfield, a few rods easterly of Wading River, and but a short distance from the line between the two Colonies, near to what is now Foxborough, at the place where Obadiah Brintnell lived a few years since.

Mr. Brintnell built him a house, or rather a sort of fort, partly of stone and part of wood, and fortified, to some extent, against the attacks of the Indians; keeping two loaded muskets constantly by his bedside, in case of an alarm during the night. The old house stood for about a hundred years.

² Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. v. pp. 247 and 252.

Mr. Brintnell was at Boston previous to his removal to the North Purchase.¹ His wife's name was Esther, married previous to 1665 (?). His sons were Samuel² (who came with his father to the North Purchase), Thomas, Nathaniel, John, Joseph, and a daughter Mehitable. An inventory of his property was taken Oct. 14, 1692; and he probably died not long previous to that date.³ His wife is supposed to have married a Smith after his death; for, in 1701, she is called "Mrs. Esther Smith."⁴

Other settlers soon found their way into the westerly part of the North Purchase, which, for many years, was a part of Norton.

On the 6th of December, 1695, Thomas Leonard, sen., and James Leonard, sen., received a deed,⁵ from the proprietors of the North Purchase, of two hundred acres of land at Stony Brook, "on the westward side of Coweesset River," as an "Incouragement" "to set up and build a forge to make iron at said place;" and it was "to be built, and in some considerable forwardness," before Dec. 1, 1696, or the grant of land was to be null and void. I have in my possession the affidavits of two persons, taken in 1717, who declare that

¹ Barry's History of Framingham, pp. 194 and 195.

² See Early Settlers.

³ Probate Records, vol. i. pp. 67 and 225.

⁴ Since writing the foregoing account, I have seen Mrs. Brintnell, an old lady of ninety years, the widow of Obadiah Brintnell, who died in 1814. She is very positive that the settlement by Thomas Brintnell was made previous to his marriage, which must have been as early as 1664. She says, "He first built his house about forty rods north of where he afterwards lived, which would be within the present limits of Foxborough, in what was then called Boston County, and there resided till after the Indian war; he supposing himself all the time within the limits of Taunton North Purchase." But, when the line was run through, it left him in what was then Dorchester; and therefore he moved (about 1685) his habitation into the North Purchase, to the spot where she (Mrs. Brintnell) now resides, whose husband was the fifth, and the daughters (who now occupy the house with their mother) the sixth, generation of Brintnells who have lived upon the same spot. Mrs. Brintnell says that "Thomas Brintnell had eight sons and two daughters." It is possible, that, living for a time within Suffolk County, the births of his children were recorded at Boston; and hence the historian of Framingham supposed he lived there.

⁵ This deed, with the autographs attached, of thirty of the proprietors of the North Purchase, — where the land was situated, — is now in my possession; and a copy of it is to be seen on the North-Purchase Records, First Book of Lands, p. 30.

the iron-works, or forge, near the dwelling-house of Major George Leonard, deceased, was begun in 1695, and in some considerable forwardness in 1696. To these Leonards was also given the liberty to take their next division of one share in the North-Purchase lands "in the best of iron-oare that they can find." They were also allowed the privilege of digging ore on any other man's land, for the use and benefit of said works, by "paying the owner of such land one shilling a tun for every tun of iron-oare they shall dig." George Leonard, the son of Thomas and the nephew of James Leonard, to whom this grant was made (probably as their agent), set up a forge, or "bloomery," as it was called, at the place designated, which was nearly in front of the spot where the old Leonard mansion-house now stands; and the establishment of this iron-forge, together with the energy and business tact of young George Leonard, soon gave new life and vitality to this neighborhood. The lands in the vicinity were speedily taken up; the population rapidly increased; and every thing seemed to prosper beyond the most ardent expectations of the proprietors of this movement.¹

The Pilgrim Fathers, and most of those who peopled this region, had fled, or were the descendants of those who had fled, from the Old World, in order that they might worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, without any one to molest or make them afraid. Hence they were generally men of principle, and of sincere and devoted piety. It was a pleasure to them to go to the house of God, and mingle their songs of praise and their prayers in unison to the great Creator and sovereign Ruler of heaven and earth. Yes, they were church-going and church-loving men, who willingly sacrificed their all

¹ If the reader will turn to the map of Taunton North Purchase, &c., in the introductory chapter, he will find the site of the first settlement by Wetherell marked with a square dot, with the letter W near it, close by the outlet of the pond; that of Brintnell marked in the same manner, with the letter B near it; and that of Leonard also indicated with a similar dot, with the letter L near it.

upon the altar of "freedom to worship God:" therefore it does not surprise us that the house of God was peculiarly dear to them, and that they were willing to endure great fatigue and inconvenience in order to attend public worship on each returning Lord's day. Having "a will," they of course found "a way," to go up weekly to the temple of the Most High. So devoted, indeed, were the early settlers of this town to their spiritual welfare, that, for several years, many of them — in their poverty, possessing no other means of locomotion — were accustomed to go on foot to Taunton, six, eight, ten, and twelve miles, to attend upon the ministrations of the gospel, returning the same day.

This would certainly have been a great effort for them, if they had been as fearful of using their limbs as their descendants have become at the present day. But they possessed strong constitutions; their very habits of life made them so; and hence a walk of fifteen or twenty miles per day through the woods, guided only by marked trees, and over not a very well-beaten path, — frequently crossing the rivers on the trunk of a single tree fallen across the stream, — was not so terrible a thing as it seems to some now, who can hardly walk a mile over a well-beaten road.

There was, however, one inconvenience connected with living thus remotely from meeting, which was a severe trial to our worthy ancestors, and which they determined to remedy at the earliest possible moment. It was this, — they could not take their children with them to the sanctuary; at least, their smaller children could not go. This difficulty they determined to remedy; for they knew the importance of early religious instruction. They knew that the spring-time of life was the time to cast the good seed of Christianity into the minds of the young. They knew, that, unless the heavenly principles of the gospel of Jesus were instilled into the youthful hearts of those who were "bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh," the pure fruits of righteousness would not come to

maturity. Next to their own, the salvation of their children from sin was deemed of the highest importance. Accordingly, some of the leading men of the settlement (urged on, no doubt, by some of the leading women; for they are always foremost in any *good* cause) met together to take counsel as to what should be done under the circumstances. It is a little uncertain whether they met in a lower or an "upper room;" but it is beyond controversy, that Eldad Earnest was called to the chair, and Hosea Hope was appointed secretary. Samuel Slow came into the meeting a little after the organization was effected, and gave it as his opinion, it was not best to be in a hurry. Isaac Indifference did not believe it was of much use to preach to, or to catechize, children. Charles Content thought it was best to let well enough alone. David Delay suggested it might, perhaps, be better to wait till there was a fuller meeting, before they took any decided measures. Daniel Decision then took the floor, and made an earnest speech, portraying in glowing colors the vast importance of early religious training to the pliant and susceptible heart of childhood, and urged immediate action; and closed by saying, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." He was followed by Peter Perseverance, who most clearly showed that all obstacles could be surmounted, and the great object they had in view could, at no distant day, be attained. "I have," says he, "but one little child; and yet, rather than that child should grow up an infidel, I will sacrifice every dollar I possess, and every foot of land I own. God helps those who try to help themselves. We must sow the seed, if we would reap the fruit. Mr. Chairman, I move the previous question." All felt that the crisis had come. The chairman, with characteristic promptness, with his firm and deep-toned voice, stated the question to be, "Shall immediate measures be taken to establish the gospel ministry in our midst, so that our children can enjoy the means of grace?" The decision was overwhelmingly in favor of action. Men, who, as we shall

soon see, "knew no such word as fail," were enlisted in this cause; men who never put their hand to the plough, and looked back, had taken hold of the enterprise; and hence success, though it might be rather tardy, was sure. Immediately the initiatory steps were taken to have their portion of the town erected into a precinct, which would enable them to establish a religious society of their own. What they did we shall record in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

PRECINCT CONTROVERSY, AND INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN.

"At least I'll try. There never yet
Was any thing lost by trying."

MISS C. A. BRIGGS.

THE following document, a copy of the original, drawn up and signed by forty-three of the male inhabitants, is the first direct movement towards the formation of a precinct, of which we have any authentic account. I found it, with many other documents relating to the civil and ecclesiastical history of Norton, among some old papers at the "old Judge Leonard House." The original draught, with the rude autographs and "marks" of the petitioners, may be seen in the archives of the State, at the State House, Boston.¹ It reads as follows:—

"We whose names are underwritten, being part of the Inhabitants of Taunton old Town, and part of Taunton north purchase, being all very sensible of the great difficulty that we are under in liveing so remote from the publick worship of God, and great need of haveing it settled amongst us, that so our children and those under our care & charge, as well as

¹ State Papers, vol. cxiii. p. 512.

ourselves, may enjoy the means of grace, and in order thereto, we have this 27th day of novem., 1707, met together, and made choice of George Leonard and Nicholas White, whome we chuse as our agents to act in our behalf in makeing Request to the town to bound us out a presink for the maintainence of a minister ; and that, when we have procured a minister to dispence the word of God amongst [us,] we might be freed from paying to the minister & Schoolmaster at town. and we do also give our sd. agents full power to do any further act or acts, thing or things, that they shall see needfull to be dun for ye bounding of sd. precink, and procureing an able orthodox minister to be orderly Settled amongst us, whether it be by petitioning to the General court to Settle the bounds of sd. precink, or by any other way or means whatsoever ; as witness our hands, the day and year above writen. we further promise, that in case a minister be procurede as abovesd., that we will each of us pay our proportion by way of rate for his maintainance. witness our hands, George Leonard, Nicholas White, John Lane, Thomas Braman, sen., Thomas Stevens, Selvanis Camble, John Briggs, John Hodges, Nathaniell Hodges, Samuell Hodges, Jabez Pratt, Thomas Braman, jun., William Hodges, Robert Tucker, Ephraim Grover, Mathew White, Seth Dorman, Ebenezer Hall, John Caswell, jun., Benjamin Caswell, John Wetherell, Ebenezer Edy, Samuell Brintnell, John Caswell, sen., Eliezer Fisher, Richard Briggs, William Wetherell, sen., Eliezer Edy, John Cob, Andrew Grover, Peter Aldrich, Israel Fisher, Thomas Grover, Nathaniel Fisher, Joseph Briggs, Benjamin Williams, Nathaniell Harvey, John Briggs, jun., Nicholas Smith, John Newland, William Cob, Benjamin Newland, John Skinner.”

On the original document, I find written the following memoranda : —

“ March 22, 1708. — At a meeting of a part of the subscribers, they made choice of John wetherel, whom they aded to the committee abovesd.”

“ June 18, 1708. — At a meeting of some of the subscribers, they gave thare agents Liberty to petition to the Genl. court for a township.”

This last vote was passed, as we shall soon see, in order to conciliate some who were opposed to the set-

ting-off of a precinct. The next day after John Wetherell was added to the committee, the following petition to the town of Taunton was prepared and duly signed: —

“March ye 23d, 1708. — Whereas divers Inhabitants of Taunton north purchase, together with divers of the Inhabitants of Taunton old township, bordering on the north purchase, made choice of we, the subscribers, whome they chose as thare Agents to make request to the town to bound us out a precinct for the maintanance of a minister; we, whose names are underwritten, do therefore, in the behalf of our friends and neighbours, humbly & earnestly desire the town seriously to consider of the vary difficult circumstances that we are under in liveing so remote from the publique worship of God, that great part of the year we cannot come to meeting; and that we can at no time of the year, without very great difficulty, bring allmost any of our children to meeting: so that, if we continue long after this manner, the sowls of our children, and those under our care and charge, will be in danger of perishing for lack of knowledge. for it is Evident from scripture that faith comes by heering, and heering by the word preacht. Tho we are not insencable of our poverty, and great difficulty that we shall thereby meet with in carrying on such desire, yet, on the other hand, we have caus to be thankfull that our neighbours are generally very forward to promote so good a work; and our povertye can be no Argument to have our precink lesened, but rather Enlarged. wharefore we Earnestly desire and hope that the town will forward and incorage so good a design, and grant that the military line may be the bounds of the precinct, which is burt's brook, and from the mouth of sd. brook to the bridge neer william wetherell, and from sd. bridge north-Estardly to the north-purchase line; that so we may not have one line for the military, and another for the minister. and, in hopes you will grant us this our request, we subscribe ourselves your humble petioners,

“GEORGE LEONARD.
JOHN WETHERELL.
NICHOLAS WHITE.”¹

¹ State Papers, vol. cxiii. p. 513.

The town of Taunton, it seems, did not accede to the request of these petitioners. They therefore turned their steps towards the Great and General Court at Boston; and, on arriving, presented themselves in this form: —

“To his Excellency Joseph Dudley, Esquire, Capt.-Generall and Governor-in-chief in and over her majestie’s province of the Massachusetts bay in New England; And to the Honored councill and Representatives now convened in Generall court this 20 day of October, 1708.

“The humble petition of Diverse of the Inhabitants of Taunton North purchase, and Diverse of the Inhabitants of Taunton old Township bordering on said north purchase, humbly sheweth, that sd. Inhabitants being vary sensible of the great difficulty they are now under in liveing so remote from the publick worship of God, and the great need of having it settled amongst them, that so their children, and those under their care and charge, as well as themselves, may Injoy the meens of Grace, They made choice of us, the subscribers, to be their agents, to make known their desire to the town of Taunton to have a precinct bounded out to them for their maintenance of a minister to dispence the word of God among them; and also to petition the Generall Court to settle the bounds of sd. precinct; and also to procure an able orthodox minister to be orderly settled among them, as may appear by a writeing under their hands, dated November the 27th, 1707, and also on the 23d of march, 1708; by which writing they also promise to pay their proportion by way of rate for the maintanance of sd. minister provided as abovesd. In persueance of sd. power and trust committed to us, we have communicated this matter to the town of Taunton, at a town meeting; and although we have Great Incorragement that the most considerable Leading men will be and are for it, yet there is some few that do hesitate about the bounds That we desire for sd. precinct; so that hetherto nothing of that nature is finished. and seeing our young ones increase and grow up apace, and that the Lord hath in marcy (as we hope it is in marcy) so Inclined the hearts of our neighbours so earnestly to desire and seek after this thing, we therefore, the subscribers, as agents for and in the behalf of sd. Inhabitants, do humbly pray this Generell Court to grant this our humble petition. and the bounds of sd. precinct which we desire is,

the line or bounds of the military company called the North-purchase company may be the bounds of the said precinct, which is a brook called burt's brook, and from the mouth of sd. brook to wennaconnit bridge, and from sd. bridge north-easterd to the North-purchase line, but leaveing out of sd. precinct all the inhabitants in the North purchase that commonly go to Bridgewater meeting, who live on the Estandly side of the rhode that Leeadeth from winnacunnit to the bay, — for they in time hope to be a precinct with part of Bridge-water, which we shall not oppose, — but takeing into sd. precinct all belonging to Taunton old Township within the bounds above mentioned. but, if all the North purchase were Enexed to Taunton for the present, we think it would be best for the manageing of public concerns; only that the lands within the bounds settled and agreed on between the proprietors of Taunton North purchase and thair neighbours, on all parts, be confirmed to said proprietors, and the abovesaid precinct settled for the maintainance of the ministry in said precinct. and we farther pray that this honored court would also apoint a committee to order where the meeting-house should be sett. all which, if this honoured court please to grant, your humble petitioners shall, as in duty they are bound, ever pray.

“GEORGE LEONARD, } Agents for and in the behalf
NICHOLAS WHITE, } of said Inhabitants.”¹

The following action was taken by the General Court upon this petition: —

“22 Octo., 1708. — Read in Council; and *Ordered*, that the Selectmen of Taunton be served with a copy of this Peton., and heard thereupon before this Court upon the Second Tuesday of the next Session of ye sd. Court, if any thing they have to say why the prayer of the within Petition should not be granted.

“ISA. ADDINGTON, Secry.

“Sent down for concurrence.”

“In the House of Representatives, Oct. 25, 1708. — Read and Passed a concurrence, And that the Hearing be upon the Second Tuesday of the next Session of this Court.

“Agreed:

THOMAS OLIVER, Speaker.

“Consented to:

J. DUDLEY.”²

¹ State Papers, vol. cxiii. p. 510.

² General-Court Records, vol. viii. p. 391.

It appears that what was called Taunton South Purchase made a move simultaneously with the North Purchase to be set off as a precinct. How the order of the General Court on these petitions was received at Taunton will be manifest by the following papers : —

“Taunton, Feb. ye first day, 1708–9. — Whereas ye selectmen of our town was served with a copy of ye North purchases and South purchases petitions, and they caused ye town to meet together this day, and Read thayr petitions in ye town-meeting, where matters were fairly debated; and there being many men of many minds, so that nothing was concluded on, only some persons would have ye selectmen to take thayr time, and write ye Court an answer.

“So the assembly ware dismissed.

“JOHN WILBORE, Town Clerk.”¹

Three weeks go by, and another town-meeting is held in reference to the matter. Here is the evidence : —

“At a Legall Town-meeting, warned and held at Taunton publick meeting-house, the 22 day of February, 1708–9, It was voted that the town do Impower the present selectmen to make return to the Generall Court in answer.

“A true copy; transcribed by me,

“JOHN WILBORE, Town Clerk.”¹

In obedience to this vote, the selectmen, the next May, at the opening of the General Court, make an answer as follows : —

“To his Excellency Joseph Dudley, Esquire, Captain-General, Governor-in-chief in and over her majestie’s Province of the Massachusetts bay, and the rest of the honorable Councill and Representatives Convened in Generall Court, May the 25, 1709, humbly Sheweth : —

“That whereas the Honoured Court sent to the Selectmen of Taunton to show their reasons (if any they have) why Taunton North purchase and South Purchase should not have their prayer granted, —

¹ State Papers, vol. xi. pp. 297 and 298.

"In answer whereunto, we say, that although it hath pleased God to Increase our numbers, — which, we hope, is in mercy, — yet must say, that, through the providence of God, a great many are so extream poor, and rates and taxes so high, that we find it hard and difficult to rub along; and the Generality of the North purchase are so poor, that we fear they will not be able to build a meeting-house and to maintain a minister." . . .

Here follows what the selectmen have to say about the South Purchase, which we omit. The document concludes thus:—

"But as for the North purchase, we think it better ffor them to be a Township than a precinct.

"This is our last and finall answer, uppon mature consideration.

" ISRAEL THRASHER, JOHN SPUR, EZRA DEAN,	}	Selectmen.
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"We whose names are underwritten are of the same mind with those above, —

"Thomas Leonard, Henry Hodges, Samuel Deane, Seth Williams, Joseph Williams."¹

On the same date as the above, the Precinct Committee present the following statement to the General Court:—

"To his Excellency Joseph Dudley, Esquire, &c., 25 day of May, 1709."²

"Whereas we, the subscribers, ageints for and in the behalff of divers of the Inhabitants of Taunton north purchase, and divers of the inhabitants of Taunton old Township, belonging to the north purchase millatary company, have petitioned this Honoured Court to bound said Inhabitants a precinct for the maintainance of a minister; and, in said petition, we have not informed the Honoured Court how far said inhabitants dwell from Taunton meeting-house; these are, therefore, to Inform this Honoured Court, that Benjamin Newland, Elezer Edy, and Ebenezer Edy, who dwell the

¹ State Papers, vol. cxiii. p. 514.

² We omit a portion of the formula in this and following documents.

nearest to Taunton meeting-house of any of sd. Inhabitants, dwell at least five miles and a half from Taunton meeting-house, as neer as can be computed; and william wetherell, Sen., John wetherell, Elezer Fisher, Israel ffisher, Nathaniel fisher, dwell about six miles from sd. meeting-house; and John Austin, John Briggs, junior, william Cob, Nicholas Smith, John Newland, Thomas Stevens, John Hodges, and Richard Briggs, dwell about seven miles from sd. meeting-house; as also Thomas Braman, Robert Tucker, and Nathaniel Hodges, and Samuel Hodges. Selvanis Cambell, William hodges, George Leonard, John Briggs, and Joseph Briggs, Dwell about eight miles from sd. meeting-house; and John Lane and John Cob dwell near 9 mile from sd. meeting-house; and petter Aldrich, nicholas white, mathew white, Seth Dorman, John Hall, John Caswell, Benjamin Caswell, and Joseph Elliot, dwell about ten miles from sd. meeting-house. Benjamin williams dwelleth about Eleven mile and a half from sd. meeting-house. all these abovenamed go to Taunton meeting: but Isaac Shepherd, Thomas Grover, Andrew Grover, Ephraim Grover, Ephraim Sheldon, John Skinner, Samuel Brintnell, dwell farther from Taunton meeting than these abovenamed, [so] that they commonly go to wrentham meeting; and they dwell six, seven, and eight miles from wrentham meeting. This account is as neer as can be computed without mesuring; as witness our hands,

“GEORGE LEONARD.
NICHOLAS WHITE.”¹

Taunton people now bestir themselves again in opposition to the petitioners, and take more decisive steps than heretofore. We have this document for proof:—

“June the first, 1709. — At a Legall Town meeting, warned and held at Taunton publick meeting-house, . . .

“2. It was put to vote, whether the town would chuse a committee of five men to give Reasons, in behalf of the Town, to the General Court, why the petitions of the North and South purchases should not be granted.

“3. It was voted, that the town shall chuse five men to make Return to the Generall Court, and give their reasons why the prayers of the North and South purchasers should

¹ State Papers, vol. cxiii. p. 515.

not be granted ; and the persons then chosen for the committee were Lieut. James Leonard, Thomas Harvey, Ensign Phillip King, Ensign Thomas Gilbert, and Jonathan Padleford.

“ TAUNTON, June the 6th, 1709.

“ A true copy ; transcribed by me,

“ JOHN WILBORE, Town Clerk.” ¹

Four days after the town-meeting, when the above-named committee were chosen, they knock at the doors of the General Court in behalf of the town, and present the following remonstrance against the prayer of the petitioners :—

“ To his Excl^y. Joseph Dudley, Esquire, &c. . . .

“ Whereas George Leonard and Nicholas White, as they call themselves, agents for and in behalf of divers of the Inhabitants of Taunton North purchase, and divers of the Inhabitants of Taunton old Township, preferred a petition to this honred. Court on ye 20th day of October, 1708, for the settling a præcinct according to certain bounds sett forth in sd. petition ; and in Reading sd. petition, in Octo. 22, 1708, this great and Generall Court ordered That the selectmen of Taunton be served with a copy of sd. petition, and to be heard thereuppon, &c., upon ye second Tuesday of the next Session of this Court, If any thing they have to say why the prayer of the petitioners should not be granted ; and, that the matter may stand In a true Light, we the subscribers, a committe chosen in Taunton, would humbly offer to this honrd. Court, that, when the tract of land was bought (called the North purchase) by the Inhabitants of Taunton, It was designed for a Township by it Self,² and not any ways to

¹ State Papers, vol. xi. p. 299.

² There is some evidence to show that this statement is correct, as will be seen from the following extract from the North-Purchase Records, p. 12:—

“ May the 13th, 1695. — At a meeting of the proprietors of the north purchase, being legally warned, the said proprietors voted and agreed that the Representatives now chosen by Taunton to Represent them in the Great and General Court, are, by said proprietors, desired and Impowered to Inform the General Court of their circumstances, and to Indeavour that no part of said North Purchase be put under Attleborough ; hoping that said North Purchase may be capable to be a Township itself in some short time. and whereas diverse of Bridgewater men have bought Land in said North Purchase, the Representative for Bridgewater is desired also to be helpfull in the premises.”

Damnifie the old township by taking any of the Inhabitants thereof then settled, or to be settled, to make the purchase a Township or precinct: for, If that may be, our forefathers and some of us layed out our own money miserably to our own wrong, and to the wronging of our poor old town. and the petitioners well knew all these sircumstances before they settled, and their imprudent settling sd. north purchase procures these difficulties; for, had they settled in or about the middle of sd. purchase, the people that are now there would have been capable of being a Township, and so to maintain A minister without breaking or harming the old town. and whereas it is Insinuated in sd. petition, that, when they had communicated to the town, They had Incoridgement that the most considerable Leading men would be for it, and as If there were but some few that did hessitate about the bounds; which must needs be some great mistake, or something else: for the town being warned together by the selectmen, upon their being served with a copy of their petition, to consider that matter (and the south-purchase petition), there was such A contention and tumult betwixt the town, — that is, the whole body almost of the town and leading men and petitioners, — that the meeting was dismissed, and nothing done but confusion. and now we come to some few objections against granting the payer of sd. petition (we humbly hope and fear will doo), upon a due consideration. First, as has been hinted, it is very grievous to and contrary to the minds of the body of the people of the old township, — Excepting some few that are Related and some ways Interrested, as things plainly appear to us, — and, If granted, we very much fear will unsettell us in our present settled state. 2ly, we know no part of the old-township Inhabitants but are Equally concerned and obliged to pay to the Reverend Mr. Saml. Danforth, our settled minister. Though some may pretend that it is butt an Inconsiderable thing that is Desired, we must say it is a great thing; for our charges are almost Intolerable already, and growing Every day. and the line the petitioners speak of would Incompass almost all our meadows, for they lye cheifly in that part of the town; and will seperate some new houses from their lands, which must needs be a great confusion. 3dly, Sundry of our neighbours of the old Township, which will be Incomposed within sd. line, If Granted, — considerable men, — have been with our selectmen, and manifested their great unwillingness to be joyned with the north

purchase as a precinct, and offered to us sundry papers signifying that they had been persuaded and imposed upon by some of ye north purchase to joyn with them to petition for a precinct, but they wholly Refused; but, upon some other considerations, did sighn some of their papers, and so when they had got their hands and by these tricks the poor subscribers are quite contrary to their minds and Intents. Improve them, as it were deceitfully, to make them part of the Intended precinct; which actions cannot be consistent with the truth and their good promises, but must needs be Displeasing to almighty God. the selectmen not agreeing to make answer to this honord. Court, the selectmen warn a Town-meeting, June 1st, 1709; and the Town and petitioners mett together; and the town chose a commitee, which are the subscribers, to act and make answers to this honord. Court. now, for which reasons we have layed down, and what may be farther offered, we do Desire and humbly hope that this honard. Court will so far in their wisdom consider the mater as not to grant the precinct Desired, Least it should be the begining of trouble with us. we would farther offer this honrd. Court, as the mind of the whole town, that they are very willing and Desirous that the north purchase should have all previlidges proper and needfull for them, both civil and Ecclasticall; and, therefore, have not the least to say against their being a township of themselves, according as was Intended from ye foundation of it (as above was hinted), and not any way to Joyn to, or Entermeddle with, the old township, or that with sd. purchase. craving pardon for our boldness, and a charatable construction of what we have writ, we pray the allmighty God to Direct you in all the affairs before you, and subscribe your honar's most humble servants.

"Dated TAUNTON, June 4th, 1709.

" JAMS. LEONARD, PHILLP KING, THOMAS GILBERT, THOMAS HARVEY, JONATHAN PADLEFORD,	}	Committy." ¹
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By this time, the opposers of setting off a precinct had succeeded in creating a division among the petitioners. Hence some of them, with others who lived

¹ State Papers, vol. cxliii. p. 509.

in the neighborhood of Winneconnet Pond, send to the General Court a remonstrance against being set off as a precinct. There is no date upon it; but I think it must be the next document in course.

“To his Excellency Joseph Dudley, Esqr., &c. . . .

“We whose names are underwritten, being inhabitants of ye town of Taunton, humbly sheweth, That wee being very sensible of ye great daingur we are in of being Impoverished and brought to great distress for yt, to witt, Som of our neighbours, Inhabitation of sd. Taunton, and som of ye west part of Taunton North purchase, being often very importanat with us to agine with them to pertition ye General Court to grant them a precincts; but we, knowing ye inability of ourselves and our neighbors, cold not comply with them; but they, after pleading there want of a precincts to be granted to them, and their inability to maintain ye sam without our help, we, willing to doe them a cindness, did, som of us, signified to ym, yt if they wold pertition ye General Court to grant a township to the whole north purchase, and so much of Taunton as was agined to them in ye military, that we would agine with them. som of us whose names are underwritten, and ye rest of us, did wholly refuse to sett our hands to any writting Either for a township or precincts neither: But they, having pertitioned ye honored Court for to grant them a precincts, contrary to our minds and intent, and hath sett forth ye limets of sd. precincts to make us a part thereof, which will be no benifit to us, but so great a charg yt will soon bring us to poverty; for we are not able to pay our parts to a precincts charg, and to pay ratts to ye town also. And, as ye pertitioners do preten to ye want of a minister to dispence ye word of God to them, we say we are in no such want; for we have ye benifitt of hearing ye word preacht by ye Reverant Mr. Danforth, under whose ministry we desire to continue. Therefore we pray ye honored Cort to consider our condition, yt we may not be consarned with any precincts, but yt we may enjoy our priviledges as formerly. And whereas som of us (namely, John wetherel, John Nulan, Benjamin Nulan, Nicholas Smith, John Briggs, junior) did sett our hands to som of there papers, but we understood ourselves only consarned with them for a township; but we understand they have made a wrong improvement of our names: we did not think they wold have taken such advantage as to improve our names as pertitioners with them for a

precints. But our comfort is, yt ye honored Cort will not suffur us to wrong one another. we subscribe ourselves your most humble petitioners,

" WILLIAM WETHERELL, sen.	JOHN BRIGGS, junr.
JOHN AUSTIN.	JOHN NULAN.
EDWARD WHIT.	BEN. NULAN.
JEREMIAH WETHERELL.	NICHOLAS SMITH.
JEREMIAH NEWLAND.	WILLIAM COB." ¹
JOHN WETHELL.	

All parties, as it seems, having now said what they desired in reference to the matter, the General Court take the following action relating thereto: —

"June 8, 1709. In Council. — Upon the hearing of the several petitions of the inhabitants of the No. and So. Purchases, in Taunton, to be made seperate Precints for the settling and support of the ministry in the respective places, —

"Resolved, that Nathaniel Thomas, Nathaniel Byfield, and James Warren, Esqrs., be a committee to repair to Taunton, and view the said several Purchases, and, upon consideration of all circumstances, to set off proper Precints to encourage the good Ends desired by the Petitioners, and to advise and Direct to the most suitable places for the raising of their meeting-houses, and to make their report to the next Session of this Court for conformation, — Nathaniel Thomas, Esqr., to appoint the Time. The charges of the said Committee to be borne by the said Precints.

"Wch Resolve, being sent down to the Representves, was concur'd in by that House.

"And is consented to.

"J. DUDLEY."²

The committee attend to their duty, and prepare their report at Taunton. It is probably known in the vicinity, that the committee are favorable to the precinct petitioners: hence the opposition make another demonstration to influence the General Court in their favor. The following remonstrances against a precinct, and in favor of a township, — the first from that part of the North Purchase which is now Easton, and the

¹ State Papers, vol. cxiii. p. 511.

² Records of General Court, vol. viii. pp. 441-2.

other from individuals in the vicinity of Winneconnet Pond, — were probably presented after the committee made their report, possibly before : —

“ September 9, 1709.

“ To his Excellency Joseph Dudley, Esqr., &c. . . .

“ Wee ye subscribers, Inhabitance and propriators of Taunton North purcheis (so called), humbly sheweth, that whereas we understand that som of our neighbours, with som of ye inhabitants of Taunton, have obtained incorage ment from this General Cort to be a Precints; but, forasmuch as our neighbours have not acquainted us therewith as they ought to do, we, being major part of sd. purceis inhabitance, and ye first Setlers, do, in all humble submition, ofer to your honors ye unhapy effects yt may happen, not only to ourselves, but to ye whole tract of Land which was, from ye foundation, intended for a township, which now it is capable of; theire being many inhabitance already settled, and many more going to settel, on said tract of Land. But if there be so great a part of sd. Land taken of as we understand is set forth for a precints by those honorable gentellmen ye committy, who have doon according to their plesure; and if ye meeting-hous be bult whare sd. committy hath appynted, — which is neare ye west End of sd. purchies, which will be servicable but to very few; wh. will be a means to spyle ye sd. tract of Land, and caus it to be wholly unfitt for a township, and frusterate ye intention of us, ye proprietors thereof, and will discourage many from setling on their Lands in sd. purcheis. And whareas they have left about one-third part of sd. purchies of ye East part, supposing Bridgewater will add part of their town to it, to make ye part a precints, it is a great mistake. ye inhabitance of Bridgewater give us no such incorage ment. Therefore we pray this honered Cort, that there may be no pertition-lines between ye one end of our sd. purcheis and ye other; but yt, if ye Honered Court thinks it convenient, wee pray yt ye Honered Cort would grant us a township, with all the privildiges belonging to a town, to ye whole north purcheis, and so much of Taunton old township as belongs to our military Company, which is from ye mouth of a Broock called Burt's Brook, and from thence to wenaconett bridge, and from thence north-East to ye sd. north purchies line; and yt ye meeting-hous may be set in ye most convenient place in ye senter, between the East and ye west End, which we concive will be most convenient

for ye whole town, both for ye worship of God on Sabbath dayes and for military trainings, and all other publick meetings. And wee would humbly say, yt wee are very sensible yt we are in a great nesessity of an able orthodox minister to be settled amongst us, to dispence ye word of God amongst us; which, when we are a town, we hope we shall be able to procure and settel amongst us; which wee hoop we shall soon indevor for, that tharein we may be happy. And whareas some have objected, and said yt ye north purcheis is to long to com to one mitteng, we think it a great mistack: for we can come to ye senter; and why cannot those who do object against it com as well as we? And, further, we pray this Cort to give a name unto our town; but, if this Cort thinks it not proper to grant us our petition, we pray the precincts may not be confirmed to those who have pertitioned for ye sam, but it may be suspended untell ye Cort can be beter informed. We do appynt and impower — to be our adiants to prefare this our pertition to ye Honored Cort. we Subscribe ourselves your most humble pertitioners, —

“William Manley, Sener, Thomas Drake, John Phillips, Benjamin Drake, William Manley, jun., John Daily, Clement Briggs, Ephraim Howell, Isaac Leonard, John Drake, George Hall, John Howard, Nathaniel Ames, Samuel Leach, Ephraim Howard, William Ames, James Keith, Samuel Lathrop, Sener, Samuel Lathrop, Juner, Nathaniel Packard, Joseph Hayward, Jame. (?) Haris.”¹

“To ye Honored Generall Cort held at Boston.

“We ye subscribers, Inhabitance of Taunton, liveing within ye precincts Line of ye North purcheis, on ye Easterly part thereof, in all humble submission doe offer to this Cort, yt whereas our naighbors have obtained a precincts to be set forth by a Committy appynted for ye same, and they have taken us into said precincts, which was contrary to our minds, altho’ we signified our minds to sd. Committy yt we ware not willing to be cut of from our minister and mitting-hous in Taunton; and sd. Committy, as wee are informed, hath appynted ye place for ye bulding sd. mitting-hous so near ye west End of sd. North purcheis yt we shall have no benefitt thereby, so yt we are like to be in wors condition than we ware in before; it being so remote from us, and a more uneasy way to travill on: Tharfore, if it be ye pleasure of

¹ State Papers, vol. xi. p. 302.

this Cort yt wee must be drawn of from our minister and mitting-hous, unto which we have heatherto belonged, and have layed out part of yt littel Estate yt we have towards ye supporting of, and help with others to buld another mitting-hous, and settell another minister, we pray yt ye whole north purchies, and ye part of Taunton which belongs to ye military Company, may be made a township, and ye mitting-hous may be sett whare it may be servisable for the whole town; which, we conseive, will be a great benefitt to all ye inhabitanee within ye tract of Land: for it is a great pity but so good a work should be prophitable to all ye inhabitanee abovesaid; whereas, if ye mitting-house be bult in ye place whare it is appynted, it will be prophitable to but a very few. We subscribe ourselves your most humble petitioners,

“Dated in Taunton,
September 12, Ana Domini 1709.

“We desire yt Mr. Robert Crosman may deliver these lines into ye Cort.

“JOHN BRIGGS, Junior.
JOHN AUSTIN.
JEREMIAH WETHEREL.
WILLIAM COB.
EDWARD WHIT.
JOHN WETHERELL.
BENJAMIN NEWLAND.
NICHOLAS SMITH.
WALTER MERY.
JOHN NEWLAND.
JEREMIAH NEWLAND.”¹

In accordance, it is presumed, with the desire of these parties, a “bill” for a township² was introduced, but did not meet with the approbation of the court.

The friends of a precinct, probably through fear that they might lose the boon desired, send the following paper to the court, giving “Some Reasons for the speedy granting Taunton North and South purchase their petitions:”—

“1st, Because now is the time that the spirit of God seems to move the hearts of those people So earnestly to desire it.

“2dly, Because, if it be now granted, it is to be hoped that some most considerable persons will be Incouraged to come and settle there, when they know that an orthodox minister is settled there.

¹ State Papers, vol. xi. p. 302.

² Ibid. vol. cxlii. p. 516.

"3dly, Because it is to be feared, if there be no settlement of the ministry among them till some of those leading men among them are taken away, and others grown up in their room that will be brot up in an ungospellised way, many of them will be so far from desiring a minister, that, if some among them should Invite a minister among them, some others would warn him away.

"4ly, Because, if the court do not grant what is desired to settle a minister in these places, when the report thereof is spread abroad that these people desired such a Grant, but the Court would not grant it, It is to be feared that it will be an Incouragement to some Envious persons to come and settle there, to the undoing of the places, and creating trouble to the Government; whereas it is to be hoped that a timely settlement of the ministry there will be a means to make those places useful in the Government, and happy to the Inhabitants.

"These petitioners do not act through any dislike to their present pastor, nor to the church in Taunton, but have as great a love for, and esteem of, said pastor and church, as to render them well satisfied and contented, if their habitations were near enough to the meeting.

"And the pastor hath as great a love and respect for them, both in the north and south purchase.

"Therefore it is not any discontent or Animosity that causeth the petitioners to stir as they do, but only that they and their children may Injoy the means of grace nearer to them."¹

In due time, the committee sent to Taunton to view the territory, &c., report as follows (what relates to the South Precinct is omitted): —

"Taunton, Augt. 31, 1709.

"Pursuant to an order of the Great and General Court, dated June ye 8th, 1709, to us Directed to Repaire to Taunton, and view the several tracts of land which the Inhabitants of the North and South purchases in Taunton have Petitioned to be made separate precincts, for the settling and support of the ministry in said Respective places; —

"And we, the subscribers, having viewed the said several Tracts, and heard the allegations of the opposite Parties

¹ There is no name attached to the foregoing "reasons." — See State Papers, vol. cxiii. p. 517.

thereto, upon consideration of all circumstances, have sett the Bounds of the several Precints as follows: That is to say, That the Bounds of the North Precint (according to their petition) shall begin at the Line between the two late Colonies of the Massachusetts and Plymouth, in the line of the bounds between Taunton North Purchase and Attleboro', and from thence southward to Rehoboth North-East corner; and from thence Eastward, on the said North-Purchase Line, to Taunton Bounds; and from thence Eastward to the mouth of the Brook called Burt's Brook, Leaving out Capt. Hodge's Land at Burt's Brook, and extending from the mouth of Burt's Brook to the Bridge made over the mill River, near William Wetherell's; and from thence North-Eastward to the North-Purchase line; and, from the North-Purchase line, the road that leads from said Bridge towards Boston to be the bounds till it come to the Line between the said late Colonies; wch Line to be the Bounds to Attleborough Bounds aforesaid. . . .

"And that the meeting-house for the said North Precint be sett on the Northward side of the way that leads over Rumford river at Crossman's way, at the place where the way crosseth it that leads from John Hodge's to the Beech Island.

"In testimony whereof, we have hereunto set our hands,

"NATHANIEL THOMAS.
NATHANIEL BYFIELD.
JAMES WARREN."¹

"16th Sept., 1709.

"In Council. — Read and accepted.

"ISA. ADDINGTON, *Sectry.*

"Sent down for concurrence.

"In the House of Representatives, Septr. 19, 1709. — Read and concur'd, with the proviso annexed.

"JOHN CLARK, *Speaker.*

"Provided that the East End of the North Purchase shall have half the sa'd Purchase as their Precint when they are able to maintain a minister, and this Court shall judge them so.

"Agreed to the Proviso in Council.

"ISA. ADDINGTON, *Secty.*

"Consented to.

"J. DUDLEY."²

¹ State Papers, vol. xi. p. 296.

² Court Records, vol. viii. p. 470.

And thus this long and exciting controversy is brought to a close by the action of the General Court granting the prayer of the petitioners for a precinct. George Leonard and Nicholas White, after more than two years of struggle, have most signally triumphed over their opposers. But they do not stop here. They are men of energy and influence; and they do not, in the joy of success, forget the purpose for which they have labored so faithfully. Hence, almost with the zeal of the prophets of old, they move onward, as we shall hereafter see, towards the goal of their efforts, — the establishing of the gospel ministry in the newly created precinct, which at this time, as it appears from the township-bill already alluded to, contained more than forty families.

We may as well record here as anywhere the fact, that, before a minister was settled to dispense the gospel truths to the friends of the precinct and their children, the territory erected into a precinct, as above recorded, was incorporated into a town.

“March 17th, 1710–11. — The following Order passed by the Council and Assembly respectively, upon the Petition of the North Precinct in Taunton, Praying to be made a Town, having the consent of Taunton therefor; viz.: —

“Ordered, That the North Precinct in Taunton be, and hereby is, granted to be a Town, distinct from the Town of Taunton, by the name of NORTON, and have and enjoy the Powers, Immunities, and Privileges by law granted to Townships; and that a bill be projected, and brought in at the next Session of this Court, fully to perfect the sd. Grant. Provided that the East End of the North Purchase shall have half the said Purchase as their Precinct when they are able to maintain a minister, and this Court judge them so.

“Consented to.

“J. DUDLEY.”¹

Rev. Pitt Clarke, in his “Historical Discourse,” preached July 3, 1825, says it was “named Norton in conformity to a corporate town of this name in Oxfordshire, seventy-four miles north-west of London;” and

¹ General-Court Records, vol. ix. p. 100.

his statement is undoubtedly correct. Many of the first settlers in America gave the name of their birth-place or some neighboring locality to the towns where they settled in New England. Most of the settlers of Taunton were from Taunton and its vicinity in England, and hence gave their settlement a name that would call up old associations of the home they had left. The town of Norton in England lies northerly, and borders upon Taunton ; and therefore, very naturally, when our town received its " baptismal name," it was called Norton, because it and Taunton were situated relatively as Norton and Taunton in Old England were. Rev. Charles H. Brigham, of Taunton, in a letter he wrote while on a visit to Taunton, England, and published in the " Taunton Whig " of Aug. 4, 1853, speaking of the points of resemblance between the two towns of Taunton, says, " Bridge-water lies on the north-east of both, and Norton on the north-west." He says, also, " There is a queer distich which runs, —

' Taunton was a furzy down
When Norton was a market-town.'

We here present to our readers the Act of Incorporation, and with it close this chapter : —

" An Act for raising a new Town by the name of NORTON, within the County of Bristol.

" Whereas the tract of Land commonly called and known by the name of the North Purchase, Lying situate within the Township of Taunton, in the county of Bristol, circumscribed within the Lines and Bounderies prescribed by a committee some time since appointed by the General Assembly, as follows; viz.: Beginning at the Line between the two late Colonies of the Massachusetts and Plymouth, in the line of the said North purchase and Attleborough ; from thence Running Southward to Rehoboth North-East Corner; and from thence Eastward, on the North-purchase Line, to Taunton bounds ; thence eastward to the Mouth of the Brook calld Burt's Brook, and extending from the mouth of Burt's Brook to the Bridge over the Mill River, near Wm. Witherel's ; and from thence North-eastward to the North-Purchase

Line; and, from the North-purchase Line, the Road that leads from the said Bridge towards Boston to be the Bounds till it come to the Line betwixt the two Late Colonies aforesaid; which Line to be the bounds to Attleborough aforesaid was set off from Taunton by and with the consent of that Town, and by an order of the General Assembly, passed at their Session in March, 1710, made a distinct and separate Town from Tawnton, containing a sufficient quantity of Lands and a competent number of Inhabitants for that purpose, and named NORTON; the full perfecting of the said Grant being adjourned and refered to the present Courts.

“In pursuance, therefore, of the afore-recited Order and Grant, and for the completing and perfecting of the same, Be it enacted by his Excellency the Governor, Council, and Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That the aforesaid Tract of Land commonly called the North Purchase, circumscribed and bounded as above expressed, Be and is Granted to be a Township Distinct and separate from Taunton; the Town to be named Norton, and the Inhabitants thereof to have, Use, Excercise, and enjoy all such Immunities, Powers, and Privileges as other Towns within this Province have and do by Law excercise and enjoy, so that the said Inhabitants settle an able, Learned, Orthodox Minister in the said Town, and from time to time allow him a Comfortable support.

“Provided Nevertheless, That the Inhabitants in the east end of the said North Purchase shall have one-half of the said Purchase as their Precinct, when they are able to maintain a minister, and this Court judge them so.

“June 12th, 1711.

“This Bill, having been read three several times in the House of Representatives, passed to be enacted.

“JOHN BURRILL, *Speaker*.

“Read three several times in Council, Concured, and passed to be enacted.

“ISAAC ADDINGTON, *Sectry*.

“By his Excellency.

“I consent to the enacting of this Bill.

“J. DUDLEY.”

CHAPTER IV.

TOPOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY.

"Nature is but a name for an effect,
Whose cause is God." — COWPER.

THE town of Norton, as originally constituted, was bounded northerly by Dorchester (now Foxborough, Sharon, and Stoughton), easterly by Bridgewater, southerly by Taunton and Rehoboth, and westerly by Attleborough. It is now bounded northerly by Mansfield, easterly by Easton, and southerly and westerly as when first incorporated.

Its length, on the north, is about five and a half miles; on the south, about seven miles. Its breadth is about five miles at the westerly end, and a little more than three and a half at the easterly end: and it embraces an area of eighteen thousand two hundred and sixty-four acres; of which the roads occupy about two hundred and eighty-four acres, and about two hundred and sixty-six acres are covered with water.

It is situated in the northerly part of Bristol County; and the old meeting-house which stood on the Common, nearly in front of the present Congregational church, was in latitude $41^{\circ} 58' 01''.90$ north, and in longitude $71^{\circ} 11' 35''.73$ west, from Greenwich.¹

Norton is about twenty-eight miles south of Boston; nearly the same distance northerly from New Bedford; and eighteen miles north-easterly from Providence, R.I.

It has four villages. The Centre is the largest; consisting of about sixty houses, two churches, one public-house, two stores, and the Wheaton Female Seminary.

¹ American Statistical Collections, vol. i. p. 107.

Barrowsville is two miles to the south-west, and consists of about twenty-five houses, a store, a Wesleyan-Methodist chapel, and a large cotton factory; half of the population at least being foreigners.

The Copper-works Village is about two miles south-erly, and consists of about twenty-five houses, the copper establishments of Crocker Brothers and Company, and a store. A large portion of the population is Irish.

Winneconnet Village is three miles east from the centre, near where the first settlement was made; and contains some twenty houses, a Calvinist-Baptist church, a store, &c. Its inhabitants are principally native-born, and industrious farmers.

The only natural pond is the Winneconnet,¹ in the south-eastern part of the town, on the shores of which was erected the first civilized habitation within our limits. It is a beautiful sheet of water, embracing an area of about a hundred and twenty-five acres, and abounding in fine pickerel and other fish.

Rumford River, occasionally on the old records called "Ten-mile" River, rises in the westerly part of Sharon, runs through a corner of Foxborough, and centrally through the entire breadth of Mansfield; thence

¹ I have spent some time, and called in the assistance of others, in trying to ascertain the meaning of the Indian word "Win-ne-con-net." According to three different writers in the Historical Magazine (vol. i. No. 8), "Winne" is shown to mean beautiful, pleasant, good, fine, or kindred significations. Hon. P. W. Leland, of Fall River, in a paper recently read before the Old-Colony Historical Society, at Taunton, upon Indian names and terms, derives the word "Se-con-net" from the two words *seki*, black, and *konk*, a goose; and explained that the terminal "et" meant place, or locality, and that the word signified "the place of black geese." If he, and the other writers we have quoted, are correct, the word "Win-ne-con-net" means "a good place for geese." I am inclined to believe that the meadows bordering upon the pond where Canoe River and Mulberry-Meadow Brook empty in would have been a good or excellent place for the wild geese to have made their nests and reared their young; and from this circumstance, doubtless, the name comes. Mr. H. R. Schoolcraft thinks perhaps the syllable "con" may be derived from *pecon*, which means a "nut." If this is so, we think the word would mean "the place of fine nuts," or "a beautiful nut place." Whether, in ancient times, the nuts were plenty around the pond, we do not know; but on Great Rocky Hill, near by, the walnut now grows most abundantly of any tree. But, after all, we think the first definition is the more accurate. We will allude to the matter again if we get any new light.

through the central part of Norton, in a southerly direction, till it unites with the Coweset or Wading River, and forms the Three-mile River, which passes on through the westerly part of Taunton, and falls into Taunton River, on the borders of Dighton.

Coweset (Indian name) or Wading River, so called because a man could wade it its entire length, rises in Shepard's Pond, on the borders of Wrentham and Foxborough, flows southerly and easterly through the westerly part of Mansfield and Norton, and unites with the Rumford, about half a mile below the Copperworks. The name "Chartley" is also applied to some parts of this stream.

Canoe River (anciently called Gooseberry-Meadow Brook) rises in the southerly part of Sharon, flows southerly through the easterly part of Mansfield and Norton, and empties into the north-westerly side of Winneconnet Pond.

Mulberry-Meadow Brook, called on the map "Leach's Stream," rises in the south-easterly part of Sharon, flows southerly through the westerly part of Easton and the easterly part of Norton, and empties into Winneconnet Pond, a few rods easterly of where Canoe River empties in. The only outlet of this pond is Mill River, close by the line of Taunton, into which town it immediately passes.

Burt's Brook, designated on the map by BB, rises in two localities in Cedar Swamp, near the south-westerly corner of the town, runs easterly between Lemuel and Asa Arnold's, and empties into Three-mile River, a short distance below Lincoln's Furnace.

Goose Brook rises also in the westerly part of the Cedar Swamp, flows northerly, passing between the Asa Hodge's House and No. 4 Schoolhouse, and empties into Wading River, a short distance above where Allen and Augustus Lane live.

Stony Brook, marked SB on the map, — sometimes also, on old records, called "Chartley," — rises in Attleborough, flows nearly east in Norton, passing in front of the old Judge Leonard Mansion House, and empties

into Wading River, a little below the bridge, near the Leonard estate.

Log Brook, marked LB on the map, rises easterly of the house of Jason F. Alden, and, running south between the house of Austin Messinger and the Common, empties into the Barrowsville-Factory Pond.

Dora's Brook (not on the map) rises westerly of No. 7 Schoolhouse, flows westerly on the southerly side of the house of Aaron Lincoln, jun., and, soon after, empties into Three-mile River, just below the junction of Rumford and Wading Rivers. It took its name from Dora (Theodora?) Leonard (supposed to be a witch), who lived in a hut on its banks.

Swab-tailed Brook (not on the map) rises easterly of the railroad, and, flowing north-easterly between Amos Keith's house and the Asahel Tucker House, empties into Canoe River, about half a mile below Eddy Lincoln's grist and saw mill.

Drink-water Brook, marked DB on the map, rises in the south part of Mansfield, and, flowing southerly, empties into Rumford River, a short distance to the south-west of Norton Alms-house.

Great Brook rises in Mansfield, flows south, and then east, between Luen C. Leonard's house and that of Thomas Gooch, emptying itself into Rumford River.

There are other brooks by which the town is watered: but they are nameless; at least, to the writer.

In all these rivers and brooks of any considerable size are found pickerel, perch, hornpouts, and, in the spring, suckers.

Anciently they abounded in the spring with herring; or "alewives," as they were once called.

I am informed by Seneca Lincoln, that, many years ago, one of his ancestors dipped up with a scoop-net out of Burt's Brook, just below where the furnace now stands, a wagon-load of them in a few minutes. But the construction of numerous dams has entirely shut out from our waters these fish, which formed an important article of diet and trade for the early settlers of the town. So fearful were they that some obstruc-

tions would be placed in the streams to prevent the progress of these fish in their annual visit, that men were chosen at town-meeting (as, for instance, in 1722-3, when the town chose "Thomas Stephens and Eleazer Fisher) to Keep Coweset or Wading River, so called, clear from all wares or any other Encumbrances whatsoever that shall stop the fish from Going up sd. River." And also, in 1745, "They made choice of Josiah Harvey, Israel Woodward, and Timothy Briggs, to take care that ye fish have a free Passage up the rivers," by removing all wears, &c., designed to stop them in their journey; and the dams that were built across the streams were, by law, obliged to be so constructed as to allow "sufficient passage-way through or round such dams" for the fish to go up and down in the spring and fall, under penalty of fifty pounds.¹

Great Rocky Hill is situated a short distance northerly of Winneconnet Pond, and easterly of Mulberry-Meadow Brook. For the information of strangers, we will say, that not the "hill," but the rocks, are "great."

Timothy Plain is situated westerly of Winneconnet Pond and Canoe River, and is traversed by the road leading from Amos Keith's to Hathaway Leonard's. It derived its name from Timothy Halloway, one of the early settlers of Taunton, who once owned a portion of it.

"Chartley" was a name given to the iron-works established at Stony Brook by the Leonards; but the name is indiscriminately applied to streams and other localities in that neighborhood. The name, probably, had some connection with the working of iron.

Lockety Neck is the point of land between Rumford and Wading Rivers, just above their junction.

On some of the old deeds, the farm now owned by Allen and Augustus Lane was said to be on Lockety Neck; and no doubt the "Neck Woods," so called, between the Centre Village and Calvin Lane's, took that name from their proximity to Lockety Neck.

¹ See law of 1741.

Ann Cobb's Bridge is over Wading River, southerly of the Common, at the upper end of the Barrowsville-Factory Pond. It took its name from Ann Cobb, who once lived near it, and was reputed a witch. A locality anciently known as "Scotlin," or "Scotland," is supposed to have been in the neighborhood of No. 3 Schoolhouse.

The Seekonk Cedar Swamp is in the south-westerly part of the town.

The Invincible Swamp is north-easterly of Winneconnet Pond, on the borders of Norton and Easton.

The Great Woods are in the northerly part of the town, between Wading and Rumford Rivers.

Beech Island is situated north-easterly of Hon. Cromwell Leonard's house, near the junction of Great Brook with Rumford River.

Crossman's Way was where the road crossed Rumford River by Loren Willis's sawmill.

The town of Norton is one of the flattest of its size in the State. There are several little swells of land, but almost nothing that can be dignified by the name of "hill." The land generally slopes to the south, as will be noticed by the course of the streams.

The soil is not of the first quality. In the easterly part, around Winneconnet Pond, it is quite sandy, yet, on the whole, is capable of being made quite productive by proper cultivation, being well adapted to the raising of most kinds of grain. The geological formation is what Dr. Hitchcock terms "graywacke;" the rocks of the town being for the most part of a slaty character: but, in some localities, the conglomerate, or plum-pudding stone, is quite prominent. Iron ore was formerly dug in large quantities in various parts of the town, and "there is more of the same sort left." In the northerly part of the town, bordering upon Mansfield, anthracite coal has been dug up; but it exists in such small quantities, and is of so poor a quality, that it will not pay for digging. Clay is to be found between Rumford River and the Depot, and bricks were once made there.

On Great Rocky Hill is a cave, formed by the projection of one very large rock over another, with a perpendicular side, producing at the top an acute angle, about five feet from the ground, with an area at the base of about fifteen feet by nine, and open at both ends; though the northerly end could very easily be barricaded, as a large rock stands within two or three feet of it. This cave, of itself, is a great curiosity; but it has become famous from the tradition, which is probably true, that it was once a noted retreat of King Philip, when on fishing excursions to Winnemnet Pond. It could readily have been turned into an almost invincible fortress. It is known to this day as "Philip's Cave."

Between the house of Williams Keith and the railroad there is a large bowlder, that will weigh six or eight tons, which rests upon another somewhat shelving rock; and it is so exactly poised, that it is believed, if a little stone, by which it seems to be blocked up, was pushed out, it would immediately, of its own accord, roll off. We hope, however, that the experiment will not be tried. For the gratification of all lovers of Nature's freaks, it should be allowed to remain. Occasionally, small holes have been found in the rocks, which have given rise to some very whimsical notions. One of these holes is back of the old Leonard House, and we may allude to it again.

The natural forest-trees are the white, red, and yellow oak; the white, black, and yellow birch; cedar, elm, hornbeam, pignut hickory, white and pitch pine, white maple, sassafras, holly, hemlock and beech, savin, chestnut, and other trees and shrubs. From the land of Judge Leonard, near where Samuel G. Hicks now lives, the keel of the frigate "Constitution" was cut; and from that neighborhood, since the death of Mrs. Bowen, in 1850, immense quantities of first-growth white oak have been carried off to New Bedford and elsewhere for ship-timber, &c.

The native fruits are the high and vining blackberry, the thimbleberry, the low and swamp blueberry, the

black whortleberry (huckleberry), the dangleberry, strawberry, checkerberry, cranberry, grape, &c.

The wild animals are, or rather were (for nearly all have now become extinct), bears and wolves, to some extent; wild-cats, deer, foxes, raccoons, beavers, muskrats, minks, woodchucks, squirrels, weasels, &c.

Tradition (rather an unreliable personage) says, that, in the early history of the town, a bear entered a sawmill when the saw was going, and, seating himself on the log, was carried along by the carriage till the saw began to scratch some part of his body. This so enraged poor Bruin, that he immediately grasped the saw with his fore-legs to give him a *hug* for his impudence; and he was, of course, literally sawed in pieces for his temerity. A wolf is said to have attacked and killed a colt belonging to Eleazer (?) Eddy, a short distance westerly from where George B. Crane now lives. Wolves and wild-cats were formerly so numerous and troublesome in the State, that laws were early enacted, offering a bounty to any person who killed them. I can find no record of any wolves being killed in Norton; but wild-cats were not so fortunate. At a meeting of the town and North Purchase held for that purpose, March 30, 1724, it was —

“Voted, that they would Pay out of the treasury of Norton five shillings a head to any Person or Persons that shall Bring any wild-cat’s head to the towne Clerk: and if the said clerk any ways scruples whether they ware cilled in the sd. towne or Present, that then they shall make oath that they ware before the towne Clerk; and then the said clerk shall Give an order to the towne treasurer for sd. sum or sums, who shall Pay it accordingly. And there shall be a rate made upon the Poles and estates of sd. towne and Present to supply the treasury for that Purpose.”

Sept. 14, 1724, the town and East Precinct “Voted to pay Benjamin Drake for killing one wild-cat, £00. 05s. 0d.” He probably was of the East Precinct.

“March ye 1st, 1724–5. — Joseph Godfrey, John Caswell, and Ebenezer White, Brought Each of them a wild-cat’s

Head to me, and I cut the Ears of from them ; and the towne of Norton was to Pay five shillings a head for each of them.

“ Per me, GEORGE LEONARD, Clerk.”

Oct. 6, 1725. — “ Voted to Raise five shillings more in said Rate to Pay to Thomas Skinner, Sen., for a wild-cat’s head which he ciled.”

March 28, 1726. — “ Voted, that they would not Pay for Killing of wild-cats the year ensueing, nor for the wild-cats which have been Killed sence ye act about said cats was out.”

In 1731, another “ Act for Encourageing the Killing of wild-cats ” was passed, offering a bounty of twenty shillings for any wild-cat one year old, and ten shillings for every one under that age, to be paid by the town, and subsequently to be refunded by the State ; but it does not appear from the records that any bounty was claimed after the passage of this act.

The last wild-cat that was killed in town was some thirty years ago, on the farm now owned by Mr. George Barker.¹

On the other hand, a law was enacted as early as 1698, forbidding any person to kill wild deer between the last day of December and the first day of August following, under a penalty of two pounds for the first offence, three pounds for the second, five pounds for the third ; and so on in that ratio for every succeeding offence. A similar law was probably re-enacted about 1738 ; for, on the 25th of October of that year, “ The Inhabitation made Choice of Eleazer Eddy, the first, and Thomas Skinner, the Second, according to the Late act Relating [to] the Preservation of the Deare : ” and for several years thereafter, at the annual March meeting, two persons were chosen for that purpose.

¹ In 1801, a showman was passing through town with a leopard in a cage. By some means, the animal escaped from confinement, and, near the old house between William Lane’s and the old Leonard estate, attacked and severely lacerated the face of Michael Sweet, a lad about fourteen years old ; and would probably have killed him, had not a pig fortunately been near, which the leopard preferred to the boy. The furious beast was finally shot before doing further damage. It was the only leopard ever killed here, and created quite a sensation among the inhabitants.

Several of the early residents of Norton had parks of deer, which they kept for their own private use; and among these were the three Judges George Leonard, the last of whom continued to have his park down to about the commencement of the present century. Previous to the death of his father, he had a park back of his then dwelling-house, on the rise of ground beyond the Leonard Mansion House; and some of the posts to the fence are still remaining. After the death of his father, he continued to keep deer in the park back of the old homestead, where many of the posts of the fence, six or eight rails high, yet remain as monuments of the pristine nobility of our town.

The following "thrilling event" connected with Judge Leonard's deer-park will doubtless be read with interest: About the year 1792, Nathan Perry, afterwards Dr. Perry of North Bridgewater, then a youth some sixteen years old, was one day passing by the park, when he playfully reached his hand through the fence, and took hold of one of the old buck's horns, and for some time annoyed him in that way. At length the deer got out of patience, broke away from his hold, and, quite unexpectedly, leaped over the fence, seven or eight feet high, and made a furious attack upon young Perry, throwing him upon the ground; but, very fortunately, the horns of the enraged deer, instead of striking his body, passed down on each of it. While in this position, Nathan grasped the horns of the buck, and succeeded in preventing him from doing any injury, till his brothers Gardiner and Alvin, with one of Judge Leonard's workmen, came and rescued him from his perilous position.

It is probable that Rev. Mr. Avery had his park of deer; but nothing is certainly known about it.

The feathered tribe are similar to those found in most towns in New England. In early times, the wild geese and ducks were quite abundant in the pond and streams. Partridges, quails, woodcocks, &c., were also more plenty than now.

Crows, blackbirds, blue jays, and woodpeckers were very numerous, and did much injury to the grain-crops of the first settlers, so that a price was put upon their heads. May 23, 1715, the town "Voted to pay three half-pence a head for every flying blackbird or Jaw's head that should be kild in this town, and the heads brought to the selectmen, or John Smith, or Eliezer fisher, between this time and next March."

It may be interesting to some of our readers to know who were the hunters in those days; and we therefore make the following extract from the town-records:—

"Sept. the 19th, 1715, voted to pay —

	s.	d.
To Robert Tucker, for killing birds	02	09
To Benjamin Williams, for killing 19 birds	02	02
To Tho. Stephens, for killing 11 birds	01	03
To John Hall, for killing six birds	00	09
To Ensign Wetherell, for killing 7 birds	00	10
To Simeon Wetherell, for killing 6 birds	00	09
To John Newland, Senior, for killing 10 birds	01	03
To Seth Babit, for killing four birds	00	06
To Benjamin Newland, for killing 5 birds	00	07
To John Hodges, for killing 20 birds	02	06
To Nicolas Smith, for killing four birds	00	06
To Lt. Brintnall, for killing 38 birds	04	09
To John Austin, for 3 birds	00	04."

March 20, 1717, "Voted three ha'pence for black-birds' heads, and Jayes and Woodpeckers."

March 19, 1718, by a vote of the town, "The act Revifed Conserving the kiling of birds;" and it is supposed, that, for several years, a premium was thus paid for the destruction of these birds.

In September, 1741, the town "Voted to raise £40 for the Suport of the Scoole, and for the birds' and Squirils' heads, and the poor." We suppose this was for the *support* of "the poor," and not a bounty offered for cutting off *their* "heads."

April 4, 1803, "Voted to give 25 cents for every old crow that should be killed in the town of Norton and carried to the Town Treasurer."

April 2, 1804, "Voted to give 10 cents for old crows' heads the year ensuing." Whether the crows had become so diminished by the bounty of twenty-five cents the year previous, or whether it was found to draw too largely upon the treasury to pay that bounty, was the reason for diminishing the reward for killing them, we do not know; but certain we are, that the destruction of these birds was a very unwise measure, and has now come to be so regarded. For all these birds, not even excepting the crow, do more good to the farmers, by destroying grubs, bugs, &c., than they do evil by eating a little corn; for any of them will leave an ear of corn, to go and pick up a worm or insect that comes along.

But the most wanton destruction of birds and some wild animals was by means of "hunts" at "old election," or some other specified time, when the young men (and oftentimes the older ones) of town met together, and chose sides to see which party would kill the largest amount of game; the party beaten paying for the supper and drink of nearly half of the town engaged in the affair.

I am told by Mr. Daniel Carpenter, that, when he was a boy, his associates sometimes chose sides to hunt birds' eggs; and the captain of the side that was beaten was required to stand upon a stone, and be pelted with the eggs found, as the grand finale of these bird-nesting depredations.

We are thankful that these "hunts" are now out of date, and trust they may never be revived; but hope that young and old will spare the birds, and thus cultivate their society; for they are the sweetest singers of earth, and the farmer's *best friend*.

CHAPTER V.

INDIANS.

"The hunter leaning on his bow undrawn,
 The fisher lounging on the pebbled shores,
 Squaws in the clearing dropping the seed-corn,
 Young children peering through the wigwam-doors."

WHITTIER.

A FEW years previous to the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, some very malignant, and probably contagious, disease is supposed to have swept from the earth a large portion of the Indian tribes who peopled this part of Massachusetts. This seems almost to have been providential, to prepare the way for the more successful occupation of the territory by the Puritans and their descendants. The principal Indian nations in the vicinity of Norton were, — 1. The Wampanoags, numbering some three thousand warriors, of whom Ousamequin, better known as Massasoit, was the chief sachem, whose territory extended from Cape Cod to Narragansett Bay. 2. The Narragansetts, with five thousand warriors, of whom Canonicus was chief, who occupied the territory of Rhode Island west of Narragansett Bay. 3. The Massachusetts, mustering three thousand warriors, with Chickataubut for their king, occupying territory to the south of Boston, extending "From Nishamagoquanett, near Duxbery Mill, to Teghtacutt, neare Taunton, and to Nunckatatesett [a pond in the westerly part of Bridgewater, now called Nippenicket]; and from thence in a straight linne to Wanamampuke [Whiting's Pond, in Wrentham], which is the head of Charles River."¹

"A straight linne" from Nippenicket to Whiting's Pond would pass through the north-easterly part of Norton; so that our town was probably the resort

¹ Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. ii. p. 157.

of both the Massachusetts and Wampanoag Indians, who were subdivided into some thirty different tribes, under the rule of a petty sachem. Massasoit had one of his residences at Sowamset, in Swansea, or perhaps in Barrington, R.I.; and was the early and constant friend of the Plymouth settlers, till his death in the autumn of 1661. He was succeeded by his son Wamsutta, or Alexander, who died in 1662, and was succeeded by his brother Metacomet, or Philip, the most renowned Indian sachem of all New England.

Chickataubut, the chief ruler of the Massachusetts Indians, seems to have been uniformly friendly to the settlers of the Plymouth Colony. His principal residence was in the neighborhood of Blue Hill, in Milton, "upon the River of Naponset, near the Massachusetts Fields, three miles to the north of Wessaguscus."¹ He died of the small-pox, as did many of his people, in the fall of 1633. He was succeeded by his son Wampatuck, or Josiah, who was also sometimes called Chickataubut.

In 1669, he was "the chiefest general" of the New-England Indians in the expedition against the Mohawks; and was killed the same year, with many of his men, in an encounter with the enemy in the Mohawk country. After his death, his brother Squamaug acted as sachem for a year or two during the minority of Jeremy, the son of Wampatuck; and Charles Josias, the son of Jeremy and great-grandson of Chickataubut, "is said to have been the last of his race."²

There seems to have been some dispute between Philip and [Josiah?] Chickataubut about the bounds of their respective territories; and, in the year 1670, Philip and Squamaug — then the acting chief of the Massachusetts Indians — met at the house of William Hudson,³ on Wading River, to settle the matter. It

¹ New-England Genealogical Register, vol. iii. p. 333.

² Genealogical Register, vol. iii. p. 341.

³ William Hudson probably lived within the present limits of Foxborough; for, in October, 1669, three hundred acres of land were laid out

was finally adjusted by an agreement that the bounds between the Plymouth and Massachusetts Colonies should be the dividing-line between the Wampanoags and Massachusetts. This agreement, with the autograph of King Philip attached, is in the possession of S. G. Drake, Esq., of Boston, and has been read by the writer of these pages.

Squamaug's name is not attached; but why, is not known. Perhaps Philip's assent was deemed sufficient. Yet, as the bounds thus agreed upon gave up to Philip a large tract of land that formerly was claimed by Chickataubut, it would seem proper that Squamaug should have signed the compact. It is, however, useless to speculate relative to the matter.

Thus it will be seen that Philip's jurisdiction eventually covered the whole of the ancient and present limits of Norton. His summer residence was but a few miles from Norton, near what was called Fowling Pond, in Raynham. He frequently visited Norton, especially the neighborhood of Winneconnet Pond, near which is situated Philip's Cave, where he no doubt had his head-quarters when on hunting and fishing expeditions to this vicinity. The soil around the pond, being light, was particularly adapted to the cultivation of corn, beans, and a few other vegetables, which the Indian women raised. The fields were prepared for culture by burning the underbrush and small trees in the autumn. The chief instruments for planting and hoeing were large clam-shells, or the shoulder-bone of some animal, — the deer or moose, for instance, — attached to a sort of handle.

There is every reason to believe that these only real *native* Americans roamed over all our plains and fished

for him "at Wayding Ryver," on the easterly side of "a great pond that Wading Ryver comes out of." * This "Capt." Hudson, as he was sometimes called, seems to have been quite a man in the Massachusetts Colony; in the records of which, frequent allusions are made to him.

* For bounds, see Records of Massachusetts Colony, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 439-40. It was probably the same place bought by Jacob Shepard in 1704. — See Genealogical Register, vol. vi. p. 128.

in all our streams, as well as planted and sported on the shores of our pond.

Various Indian implements have been found in different localities in town. Stone hatchets, gouges, pestles, spear and arrow points, have been picked up from time to time, and some of them quite recently.¹ On the old Leonard estate, several Indian encampments were discovered and demolished by cultivating the land.² Another similar encampment is believed to have been near the house of Melzar Burt, on the borders of Canoe River.

The point of land between the Rumford and Coweset or Wading Rivers, near their junction, and about a mile and a half from the centre of the town, was once the scene of a battle between the Whites and Indians.

I have searched diligently for some authentic account of this engagement; but I can find none. Several persons have informed me, that, in some history of the Indian wars, they had seen an account of it; but I think they must be mistaken, and have confounded tradition with history. Yet it is possible that some account has been printed; but, if so, it is very strange that no one can point it out to us.

There is, however, no doubt that a battle actually took place on this neck or point of land. In the records of the proprietors of Taunton Old Town³ is to be found an agreement about land, made March 11, 1715-16, between John Hodges and Thomas Stephens. This land was situated "in Norton, on the south-west side of Rumford River, near where the two rivers (namely, Rumford and Coweset) do meet;" and the place is called "Lockety Neck." In 1712, land was laid out to Thomas Stephens near the place of "Lockety Fight," on "Lockety Neck."⁴ Thus there

¹ We would suggest, as these things are becoming rare, that all that can be found be collected together, and deposited in some place of safety, as interesting memorials of the once noble race of men who peopled this region previous to its occupation by white men.

² Rev. Pitt Clarke's Historical Sermon.

³ First Book of Lands, p. 60.

⁴ Ibid. p. 184.

can be no questioning the actuality of the battle, and the locality of it.

Some years ago, the plain, which extends to within three or four rods of the junction of these rivers, was ploughed up, and large quantities of spear-points were found, with the appearance of having been thrown from the extreme point of the land, which is low ground, up to the plain, some twelve or fifteen feet higher; and this fact seems to agree with the traditional account of the conflict.

The traditional accounts are somewhat conflicting, but amount to this: The Indians had either attacked, or were known to be planning an attack, upon Taunton. A party of the Tauntonians went out in pursuit of them; and, leaving a portion of their number on each side of Three-mile River, where Rumford and Wading meet, the remainder divided their forces, and a part went up one river, and the rest the other, and crossed over on to the neck, just above a swamp — in which the Indians were secreted — that extended across from one river to the other, and drove the savages down to the junction of the rivers, where they were prevented from crossing by the men left to guard that point; and thus, after a severe conflict, they succeeded in killing or capturing the whole party of the enemy.

This swamp is supposed to have been the wet land extending from river to river between Elbridge G. Hunt's and the Copper-works. It might have been the wet land commencing a short distance below Mr. Robinson's wheelwright-shop, and extending through the Neck Woods to the Factory Pond at Barrowsville; but I think it must have been the former locality. It must be remembered, that great changes have taken place within two hundred years in the physical appearance of the country. By clearing up the forests, many places that were called swamps have become so dry as not now to be known by that appellation.

A remarkable instance of this kind is at what, two hundred years ago, was called Fowling Pond, in Rayn-

ham, where no vestige of a pond now remains. So this swamp where the Indians were concealed would hardly be known by that name at the present day.

The exact time of "Lockety Fight" is not known. It is supposed, however, to have been during Philip's war in 1675 and '76. In Baylies's "Memoir of Plymouth Colony," part iv. p. 165, he mentions a skirmish with the Indians, which might have been at this place. The reader will bear in mind that Norton was then a part of Taunton. Baylies says, —

"On the 6th of August [1676], an Indian fled to Taunton, and, seeking to make terms for himself, offered to conduct the English to a party of the enemy, representing that they might be taken with little difficulty or danger. Twenty of the Tauntonians ventured out, and surprised and captured the whole; being twenty-six."

It is with great reluctance that I am compelled to leave this matter in some doubt. We hope, however, that what has been said will stimulate inquiry till the doubts are resolved.

It is well known that Taunton suffered less than almost any town from the Indians during Philip's war. Near Philip's summer residence, in what is now Raynham, then Taunton, the Leonard family had established their iron-works. From them Philip had received many favors, and been on terms of great intimacy; and this fact is supposed by Mr. Baylies to have been the reason why Taunton was so little molested. Mr. Baylies¹ says, —

"In his [Philip's] excursions, he had made himself acquainted with the Leonards. They repaired his guns, and supplied him with iron, and with such tools as are most prized by savages; and uniformly treated him with kindness and attention. He had become more attached to this family than to any of the English; and he gave his Indians, at the commencement of the war, the strictest orders that they should never injure a Leonard. As he knew, that, in a general attack on the town, this favorite family might be exposed

¹ Part iii. p. 120.

to dangers equal to those of the other inhabitants, it becomes, therefore, extremely probable that his attachment to the Leonards prevented the destruction of Taunton."

Another example serves also to illustrate Philip's humanity. A Mr. Cole had settled near to Philip, and lived in great friendship with him.

"In June, 1675, Philip informed him that his young men were very eager to go to war against the English; but, when he could no longer restrain them, he would let him know. Accordingly, on an evening previous to the fatal 24th, canoes arrived from Mount Hope with advice from Philip, that Mr. Cole and family must go over to Rhode Island, as his people would begin the war. They embarked; and, the next morning, their dwellings were burned."¹

In these instances, we have exemplified one of the noblest traits of character belonging to civilized life; which clearly indicates that Philip was not so terrible a monster as many supposed he was. In fact, we do not believe he was; but we regard him as one of the most patriotic and truly noble men that ever lived in any country. Had he been an Englishman, and manifested the same firm resolve and unfaltering devotion to the interests of his country, he would have been raised almost to the rank of a demigod.

It is said, that, a few years after the first settlement by Mr. Wetherell, a party of Indians, who were on a hunting expedition, came to his barn in the night, and killed a two-year-old colt, and roasted and ate him, and then raked up the coals, and left without disturbing the family. They are supposed to have been impelled to this act by necessity, game being rather scarce.

In the early history of the town, a party of Indians called at the house of one of Mr. Annes A. Lincoln's ancestors, and borrowed a kettle, and filled it with little mud-turtles, and then boiled and ate them. This was probably near where Seneca Lincoln now lives.

¹ Church's History of Philip's War, p. 340.

Many years ago, there lived about half a mile from, and directly in front of, the present residence of George Lane, an Indian by the name of Quock; probably the last of that noble and vigorous yet much-abused race who had a habitation within our borders. An orchard near where his wigwam stood is to this day known as "Quock's Orchard." This Indian is supposed to have been a slave the latter part of his life, first of Major George Leonard, and then of his son Ephraim. On our town-records we find this entry: "Dick, an Indian man, Major George Leonard, Deceased, Gave to his son Ephraim; deyed the 4th of December, 1727." This is entered in the handwriting of Col. George Leonard, then town-clerk, and a son of Major George.

In the index to the volume of births, deaths, &c., made by Col. Leonard, the death of "Dick" is entered under the letter Q; which seems to indicate that his surname began with that letter. Hence it is inferred that his whole name was *Dick Quock*.

To such a miserable end came many of those — the once proud owners of the soil on which we dwell — who were most cruelly deprived of their possessions, and crushed to the dust beneath the avarice of those calling themselves *Christians*.

CHAPTER VI.

SETTLEMENT OF A MINISTER, ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH, &c.

"Before the loftier throne of Heaven
The hand is raised, the pledge is given, —
One monarch to obey, one creed to own:
That monarch, God; that creed, his word alone."

SPRAGUE.

HAVING secured an answer to their prayer for a precinct, the early settlers at once turn their attention to the great object they had in view during the precinct

struggles, — viz., the establishment of the gospel ministry among them.

Who preached the first sermon, or when it was preached, is, by the loss of the earliest records, left a blank.

But, of course, a candidate for the ministry was to be procured. "Whom shall we get? Where shall we send? Who knows of the man that will come, and build us up in holy things?" were questions frequently asked and discussed at the meetings of the early settlers. It is supposed, that, within a few weeks after the establishment of the precinct, a candidate was found; for the men engaged in this enterprise would not be slothful in their endeavors to establish the ministry of Christ in the newly created parish. Rev. Pitt Clarke, in his "Historical Sermon," already alluded to, says, "Several attempts were made to settle a gospel minister; but the influence of Rev. Mr. Danforth, of Taunton, was so great, that they found it impracticable to ordain any one without his approbation. A Mr. Phillips, of Andover, received a unanimous call, and gave an affirmative answer; but, for the above reason, was not ordained." This was undoubtedly Rev. Samuel Phillips, who was born at Salem, Feb. 17, 1689–90, and was the son of Samuel and Mary (Emerson) Phillips. He graduated at Harvard, 1708; and, no doubt, commenced preaching here about the 1st of January, 1710, and probably was here several months. The early settlers were men of intelligence, and hence were aware that ministers could not live by faith alone; and therefore, "April 7th, 1710, a Rate was made of 40lb. to Paye ye minister."¹

Undoubtedly Rev. Mr. Clarke is right in saying that Mr. Danforth's influence did not allow of Mr. Phillips's ordination. Those who were wishing to settle a mini-

¹ This vote, and several others relating to the settlement of a minister, I found on a slip of paper; and they appear to have been copied from the old records that are now lost.

ster in the new precinct were members of Mr. Danforth's church at Taunton, and naturally would consult his wishes relative to the man they should settle. Finding that Mr. Danforth's influence was against him, Mr. Phillips took a final leave of this neighborhood; and, in the latter part of the year 1710, turned his steps to Andover, and commenced preaching in the south parish of that town, where he was ordained Oct. 17, 1711. He married Hannah White, of Haverhill, Jan. 17, 1711-12; and was the father of Hon. Samuel Phillips of Andover, and Hon. John Phillips of Exeter, N.H., — the founders of Phillips Academy at Andover, and of Phillips Exeter Academy at Exeter, N.H. Mr. Phillips is said to have been an excellent man, but so economical as to blow out his candle when he began the evening prayer. Yet he was very punctilious in distributing among the poor a full tenth of his income, of which he kept an account.¹

As a portion of the old township of Taunton was incorporated into the North Precinct, and as many of the settlers of the said precinct were either proprietors, or intimately connected with the proprietors, of the old town, the latter naturally felt some interest in the prosperity of the precinct, and especially in the settlement and support of a minister. Hence divers of them made each a small contribution of land for whatever minister should be settled in the new parish. Here is the proof: —

“We, the subscribers for the Encouragement of a Learned, orthodox, pious minister to settle in the Sacred employ of the ministry in Taunton North precinct, Do hereby Give and Grant the severall quantities of land annexed to our names, hereunder written, unto the first minister who shall settle in said North precinct; Desiring of the proprietors of Taunton old Township that it may be layed out on the next Division of land in said Township, Either in one Entire tract or more, in such place or places where it may be most convenient and

¹ For further particulars of him and his portrait, see Bond's History of Watertown, p. 877, &c.

pleasing to the first minister that shall there settle, on any lands, as yet common or undivided, in that part of the old Township lands which now fall to be within the line of the North precinct; and particularly on land, now common, which lyes near the place appointed by Authority for the meeting-house to be sett upon, on the north and south side of the way, as shall be most convenient.

	No. of Acres.		No. of Acres.
John Pool	12	Samuel Danforth	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Robert Godfree	1	Henry Hodges	1
Joseph Hall	1	Thomas Harvey, Grand Senior .	1
James Hall	1	Nicholas White	1
Isaac Marrick	1	John Andrews	1
Increase Robinson	2	John Tisdale	1
Phillip King	1	John Hodges	1
James Walker, Senior	2	Thomas Leonard	3
Abram Jones	1	John Smith, Grand Senior . . .	1
James Phillips	1	James Leonard, Jun.	1
Shadrack Wilbore	1	Thomas Lincoln, Grand Senior	$\frac{1}{2}$
Benjamin Wilbore	3	John Macomber	1
James Burt	1	Thomas Dean	1
Samuel Blake	2	Seth Williams	1
Joseph Willis	2	John Smith, Junior	$\frac{1}{2}$
Nicholas Stephens	1	Joseph Wilbore	1
Benjamin Hall	1	John White	$\frac{1}{2}$
Samuel Knap	1	John Leonard	1
John Mason	1	Ezra Dean, Senior	1
Nathaniel Williams	1	Jonathan Williams	1
James Tisdale	1	William Haskins	2
John Crossman	1	William Wetherell, Sen.	2
Thomas Willis	$\frac{1}{2}$	Edward Leonard	1
Ebenezer Robinson	1	John Richmond, Senior	1
Joseph Tisdale	2	Ens. Thomas Gilbert	1
Mr. Giles Gilbert	1	Joseph Williams	1

“All these severall parcells of land mentioned in this paper is Granted to the first minister that shall settle in the work of the ministry in the north precinct, on both sides of the way that goeth from Nathaniel Hodges’ to the meeting-house in said precinct, and on both sides of the way that leadeth from the meeting-house in said precinct to Samuel Hodges’ house, and partly on the northerly side of said meeting-house, runing up towards the land of Major Leonard; to be Laid out as may be most convenient for the first minister that shall settle in said precinct. the whole sum granted is seventy-three acres and three-quarters, on the sixty-four-acre division.

“Granted January the fifth, 1710, by the Committee for the sixty-four-acre division.

“Attest:

“THOMAS LEONARD, Clerk.”¹

¹ Proprietors’ Records (Sixty-four-acre Division), p. 127.

This land included all the farm now owned by Alvaris Caswell; a portion of the Rev. Pitt Clarke estate; also the lot back of Mrs. Harriet Barrow's new house; the lot back and southerly of the Town House; and probably the lots occupied by the Mansion House and Mr. Rogerson's store, &c.

Judge Thomas Leonard, one of the proprietors of the iron-works, and the father of George, who took so conspicuous a part in securing the grant of a precinct, in his will, dated Jan. 29, 1711-12, and probated Feb. 5, 1713-14, gave to the first minister that should be "orderly settled" in the western part of Taunton North Precinct, and continue there in the ministry seven years, twenty acres of land; and, in case he continued fourteen years in the ministry, twenty acres more: but if he did not remain fourteen years, then the second settled minister who should remain seven years was to have the last twenty acres. This land was situated northerly of the road between Schuyler Freeman's and the Holman Place. Possibly Mr. Freeman's house stands on a part of the lot.

The departure of Mr. Phillips compelled the precinct to look about for a new candidate. Mr. Danforth has a particular friend whom he wishes to have settle as his near neighbor, and strongly urges the people to hear him. He was at that time preaching at Freetown. But things did not look so promising to him there as at Taunton North Precinct; and hence he wished to preach here. This man was Joseph Avery. With the advice and at the urgent solicitations of their old pastor, Mr. Danforth, the North-Precinct people consent to have Mr. Avery preach to them a few times. On what all-important Sunday he appeared before the assembled wisdom and gravity of our Puritan Fathers, as a candidate for the holy office to which he wished to consecrate himself, we do not know; but it was probably in September or October, 1710, soon after Mr. Phillips left, — possibly the next Sunday. His services are acceptable to the people. Mr. Danforth urges them to give him a call. We are therefore prepared to find the following record: —

"December the 23rd, 1710.—At a meeting of the Inhabitants of Taunton North Purchase, [they,] 2ly, made choice of Mr Joseph Avery to settle with them in the work of the ministree, and to be their minister, if he see Cause to Except.

"3ly, they made choice of George Leonard and Nicholas White to go and acquaint Mr. Avery that they have chose him for their minister, and also to treet with him about his settleing with them in the work of the ministree.

"4, the meeting was adjourned to the third day of January next."

"Jan. 3rd, 1710–11, they voted to Give Mr. Avery 15s. a sabath, for the time that he shall trantiently Preach among them, before they have come to any certin Bargaine with him; and also 15s. for ye Last Sabath."

"feb. 2nd, 1710–11, ye comitee ware ordered to make their Proposals to Mr. Avery."

But he is in no hurry to return an answer to the "call" he had received. While he is debating in his own mind whether he shall accept or not accept the invitation thus proffered, and asking the guidance of Heaven in the matter, we will take occasion to look somewhat into his private history. Rev. Joseph Avery, the fourth and youngest child of William and Elizabeth (White) Avery, was born in Dedham, April 9, 1687. His mother was his father's second wife. By his first wife, William Avery had four children; so that Joseph was the eighth child on the father's side. Joseph's father (probably born in England), who came over, when quite young, with *his* father William, was a man of some consequence, being deacon of the church, and holding at different times the offices of town-clerk and selectman of Dedham. Of Joseph's boyhood and early life we can gather nothing. His father holding, however, an important office in the church, and the fact that the son selected the holy work of the ministry as his profession, furnishes some evidence that he was "brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Mr. Avery graduated at Harvard College in 1706, at the early age of nineteen. His brother John, two years older, graduated at the same time, and was subsequently settled in the ministry at Truro. The

same year that Joseph left college, he was employed at Rehoboth "to keep school within the Ring of the Green, for a quarter of a year, for seven pounds ten shillings, silver money."¹

Previous to Oct. 30, 1710, he had preached at Freetown; for, on that day, John Hathaway and twenty-three others, of Freetown, petition the General Court² to grant aid to Mr. Avery for his encouragement to preach still among them. They ask the court to give as much "as they were pleased to give last year." March 17, 1710-11, the court passed the following resolution:—

"Resolved, that there be allowed and paid out of the Public Treasury to Mr. Joseph Avery, after the Rate of Twenty Pounds per annum, for each Sabbath he hath or shall preach at Freetown, from the time he was last paid to the session of the Court in May next.

"Consented to:

"J. DUDLEY."³

We presume this movement at Freetown was made because Mr. Avery had left them to preach as a candidate here, and they were anxious to retain his services. It is supposed, however, that he did not return to Freetown to preach for any length of time, but continued to minister to the people here; for "at a meeting of the town of Norton, Sept. 19th, 1711, voted to Mr. Avery his salary, £40. 0s. 0d." This was for his first year's service. A year went by after he was called to settle, and no response is received from Mr. Avery; yet the general understanding in the town is, that he will finally accept the call, if sufficient encouragement is given. At any rate, his hearers mean, if it is in their power, to win him from any other love he may have. Accordingly, the project of building him a house was started. "Yes," says one (and we have no doubt who he was), "let us build a parsonage. Let us give him a place to live in, and he will be the more likely to remain." That man was George Leonard. "I second

¹ Bliss's History of Rehoboth, p. 133.

² State Papers, vol. xi. p. 369.

³ General-Court Records, vol. ix. p. 100.

the motion," says another. "It is a capital idea: for, as things now are, the foxes have holes, and the birds have nests; but our minister has not where to lay his head." That man was Nicholas White. And, when George Leonard and Nicholas White combine to do any thing, it must be done. Certainly, as we shall see, they were more successful than the parish have been in later times about building a parsonage.

A tax was levied upon the town to assist the minister in providing a habitation. We here present the tax-list to our readers:—

RATE-BILL FOR MR. AVERY'S HOUSE.

NAMES.	Heads.		Real Estate.			Personal Estate.		
	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
George Leonard	13	04	00	15	06	00	14	01
Lt. Samuel Brintnell . .	20	00	00	04	04	00	05	05
Samuel Hodges	13	04	00	02	09	00	05	02
John Cob.	06	08	00	00	03	00	01	09
Selvanis Cambell	06	08	00	01	08	00	01	10
Nathaniel fisher	06	08	00	00	03	00	02	09
Andrew Grovier	06	08	00	01	04	00	02	01
Ephreim Grovier	06	08	00	01	04	00	04	00
Thomas Grovier	06	08	00	01	07	00	03	10
John Hodges	06	08	00	03	03	00	06	00
Nathaniell hodges	06	08	00	02	01	00	03	10
Thomas Stevens	06	08	00	03	03	00	04	00
Eliezer Edye	06	08	00	02	02	00	03	03
Benjamin Newland	06	08	00	01	04	00	00	09
Robert Tucker	06	08	00	01	05	00	01	10
Nicolas White	06	08	00	02	05	00	06	05
John Skinner	06	08	00	02	07	00	03	10
John hall.	06	08	00	01	04	00	04	07
Petter Aldrich	06	08	00	00	09	00	03	04
Joseph Briggs	06	08	00	01	04	00	00	07
Richard Briggs	06	08	00	01	05	00	01	04
Eliezer fisher	06	08	00	01	04	00	02	08
Israell fisher	06	08	00	00	00	00	01	04
Benjamin Williams	06	08	00	01	05	00	04	08
John Wetherell, Sen. . . .	13	04	00	03	04	00	07	02
William Wetharell, Sen. .	13	04	00	01	09	00	05	00

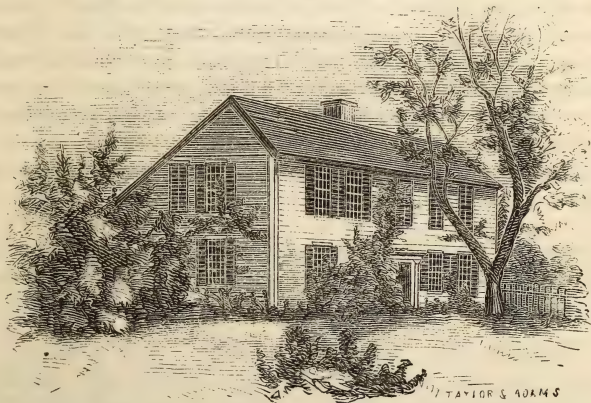
Rate-Bill, continued.

NAMES.	Heads.		Real Estate.			Personal Estate.		
	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	£	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	£	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
John Austin.	06	08	00	01	07	00	02	04
Nicolas Smith	06	08	00	03	04	00	06	08
John Brigs, Jun.	06	08	00	01	09	00	02	08
John Caswell, Sen.	06	08	00	01	04	00	07	10
Benjamin Caswell.	06	08	00	01	04	00	02	05
John Newland	06	08	00	03	04	00	05	00
Seth Dorman	06	08	00	00	03	00	00	00
Joseph Eliot	06	08	00	00	00	00	01	04
William Hodges	06	08	00	01	05	00	03	06
Mathew White	06	08	00	01	04	00	02	11
Isaac Sheapard.	06	08	00	00	00	00	01	4
Samuell fisher	06	08	00	00	00	00	03	4
John Smith	06	08	00	02	05	00	03	10
John Lane	13	04	00	00	00	00	00	0
Ebenezr Edge	06	08	00	01	04	00	01	10
Daniell Braman	06	08	00	02	09	00	02	05
William Wetharell, Jun.	06	08	00	00	00	00	01	06
William Cobb	06	08	00	00	00	00	00	00
Nathaniell Hervey	06	08	00	00	00	00	01	10
John Wetharell, Jun.	06	08	00	00	00	00	01	4
Samuell Brintnell, Jun.	6	08	00	00	00	00	00	9
Samuell Bayley	06	08	00	00	06	00	01	4
John Brigs, Sen.	06	08	00	01	10	00	02	05
James Caswell	06	08	00	00	00	00	00	9
Edward White	06	08	00	00	00	00	00	0
Samuell Blake, Sen.	00	00	00	02	06	00	00	0
Widow Smith	00	00	00	00	00	00	02	1
Benjamin Willis	00	00	00	01	00	00	00	0
Samuell Alline	00	00	00	01	00	00	00	00
Robert Woodward	00	00	00	01	08	00	00	0
Thomas Hervey, Sen.	00	00	00	00	10	00	00	0
William Hervey, Jun.	00	00	00	00	10	00	00	0
Morgan Cobb	00	00	00	00	08	00	00	0
Jonathan Lincoln	00	00	00	00	10	00	00	0
Jeremiah Newland	00	00	00	00	10	00	00	0
Hanah Deen	00	00	00	00	10	00	00	0
William pratt	06	08	00	00	00	00	00	0
Jonathan Williams	00	00	00	01	01	00	00	0
James Leonard, Jun.	00	00	00	02	03	00	00	0
George Hodges	00	00	00	00	09	00	00	0

"This rate, being to pay Mr. Avery 32 pounds towards building his house, was made by us, the subscribers, this first day of January, 1711-12. it contains 32. 8. 0., Besides 0. 16. 6. put in for the constable. the eight shillings is for makein the rate.

"GEORGE LEONARD, }
JOHN WETHEREL, } Assessors."
THOMAS STEPHENS, }

Those whose heads are not rated were, no doubt, non-residents. The house was, we presume, erected soon after the rate was made, though not entirely finished for some years. This house, thus early built for Mr. Avery, stood on the land already given to and laid out for the first minister; and a portion of it is still (1858) standing. It is owned by Mr. Caswell, and occupied by the present pastor of the Congregational parish. We here give a picture of it as it now appears.



Mr. Avery's House, built in 1711-12.

It now fronts to the east. The end we see in the picture is to the south, and was originally a portion of the front-side of the house. A large room, nearly twenty feet square, was, some years since, taken off from the west end; and an addition from what is now

the front-door, towards the north, was put on, many years ago, as an L. The roof was originally four-sided, the south and north sides being longer than the east and west; the house being about forty-six feet long and twenty wide. There were two large rooms on the ground-floor, and two large chambers above. The space between the two rooms—about twelve feet wide—was occupied by a huge stone chimney, topped out with brick, which was taken down some twenty years ago, when a portion of the house was torn down, and the rest repaired, and the roof put on, as it now appears, by Capt. D. King.

While preparations for building him a house are going on, no response to the call came from the minister, who is still preaching to the people. The town, "Sept. 17th, 1712, voted to Mr. Avery, for his salary, 45—0—0." This was five pounds more than the year previous; a further evidence that the town are anxious to hear a favorable answer to their invitation. Another year passes away, and still Mr. Avery gives no answer. He certainly was a very deliberate man. The town, however, "let patience have its perfect work;" and, "Oct. 6th, 1713, voted to Mr. Avery, for his salary for this year, 45—0—0."

Almost another entire year passed away before we find the following record:—

"On the 13th of September, 1714, Mr. Avery Gave his answer, which was Excepted by ye town; and, on that day, they voted to Mr. Joseph Avery his salary, 50—0—0."¹

Whether Mr. Avery's "answer" was written or verbal, we are not informed; nor are we told whether it was an acceptance or declination of the call extended to him "to settle with them in the work of the ministree," nearly *four* years before. Yet we have abun-

¹ From his settlement to 1720, his salary was £50; from 1721 to 1734, it was £60; in 1735 and 1736, it was £80; in 1737, £100; in 1738, £160. From 1739 to 1742, he had £120; then, for three years, he had £130. From 1746 to his dismissal, his salary was £140.

dant evidence that it was favorable to the wishes of the people.

And now, again, the town is all life and animation. A great and all-important event is soon to take place ; or rather, we may say, two events, — the gathering of a church, and the ordination of the candidate who has consented to become their teacher and spiritual adviser. The laying of the foundation of a new church of Christ in the wilderness was attended with many difficulties and inconveniences. Yet the men who peopled the wilderness, and were making it blossom like the rose, were not discouraged at trifles. The hand of God was leading them ; and hence they were sure to come out right in the end. The day of ordination is fixed upon. The pastor and messengers of some of the neighboring churches are invited to form a council, and assist in the work of consecration. In the mean time, measures were in progress for the gathering of a church ; a sort of nucleus, around which, it was hoped, a whole galaxy of saints would soon cluster. A covenant — which, in those days, was never very strictly construed, but was considered more as a bond of union among the members than as a creed — was prepared.

It is brought forward for the acceptance of those who had signified to the pastor elect their desire to become members of the proposed church.

The little band met ; not in an “upper room,” for the houses in those days were principally of one story. Perhaps it was in the house of God, already erected, and so far completed as to be occupied. The pastor elect, in solemn tones and measured voice, read it over, sentence by sentence, for their acceptance. With a few additions and expurgations, it is made satisfactory to all. The vote of acceptance being taken, the pastor elect affixes his signature ; and, after him, walk up to the table, one by one, and pen their rude autograph or make their still ruder “mark,” those whose names the reader will find attached to the document which we now present to the reader : —

COVENANT.¹

“We, who are, by the holy and Gracious Providance of our most Gracious and mercifull God, Brought unto this Blessed oppertunetey, unto this Extreordinary duty, of Joyning ourselves togetheather according to the Instituted Church visible, Being deeply sencible of our own utter Insufficiency (of ourselves) unto so high and holy a worke, as also a Priviledge; and having desired and Laboured solemnly and sinsarely to sarch our own hearts and ways, and to humble our souls deeply and Thoroughly before God, and to obtaine Pardon from Him, and Peace with him, through the Blood of Jesus Christ; and being also awfully apprehensive of the dreadfull Presance of God,—before whome we stand,—and of the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Exercise of [his] Kingly and Prophetical office in his church,—we do (in dependance upon his Grace, and the Conduct and assistance of his holy sperit, and in hope of his Gracious acceptance), in his holy Presance, name, and fear, Solamnly, sincearly, visibly, and Profesedly, by our owne free act, Joynntly Give up ourselves and our seed to almighty God, as our only God, acording to the termes of his own everlasting Covenant; and unto our Lord Jesus Christ, as our only and absolute Saviour; engaging ourselves with all our Hearts and with all our soules unto him, in a way of obedience unto his Great Gospell ordinance of Church fellowship, to Live and walk together in a way of free and full subjection unto the only Power and authorety of him, our dear and Blesed Lord Jesus, the Great and only Shepard and Bishop of our souls, as his Power is visably and ministerially Exercised in the Regular and orderly administration of all Gospel ordinances, Both of doctrine, discipline, and worship, in his Church, by such officers whome he has Gifted and Given unto his Church unto that end; and also as his Power is exercised in and over our souls by his holy Sperit, unto whome also we Give up ourselves to be an holy tempel in the Lord. And we do further Covenant with our Lord Jesus Christ,

¹ The original draught of the covenant, with the autographs of the first members, is not to be found. It was undoubtedly the composition of Mr. Avery. The oldest copy we have found, the one before the reader, is mostly in the handwriting of Col. George Leonard; a few blank spaces being filled in the handwriting of Mr. Avery. The reader will perceive that there is very little theological doctrine in it. It was probably intended to be truly a covenant, and not a creed; for Mr. Avery was not a man who wished to enslave the human mind.

through the Graces of his holy Sperit, to Keep ourselves clear and free from all Profaine Communion with the Profaine world, and from all prophane communion with aney societies of men not walking acording to the Rules and command of Jesus Christ; and to Keep unto him, according to this our Holy covenant, with this Perticuler Instituted Church visbell. and further, we do, in the presence of God, and in his holy name and fear, Give up ourselves, one unto another, by the will of God, Covenanting to walk & Live togeather as members of a Church of Christ, Profesing and Practising that one only true Religion which is Revealed to us in the word of God, by the doctrine both of faith and obedience, according to that Knowledge which God has Given us of it; and also in the exercise of Brotherly Love and Christian Charety, in the Constant Performance of all duties of Church Communion, under the Regular administration of word, prayers, seals, and censures, even all Church administration, and that as God shall help us, inoffensively and unblamebly, in order unto our mutuall edefycation and consolation. Finally, we do Covenant (by God's Grace) to Keep our Communion Pure and Intire within ourselves, and to maintaine orderly Communion with all other orthodox¹ and Rightly Constituted Churches of Christ; endevering to Presarve the unity of the sperit in the Bond of Peace.

"This Holy Covenant we Humbly undertake in the name and fear of God, with Humble Confidence in and dependance upon him for the assistance of his Grace unto the faithfull Performance of all these our holy Covenant duties unto himsele, and one unto another, with Patience and Perseverance to the end with all; Humbelly and most hartely Praying that God would Pardon all our sins, both Past and Present, & accept of us as his Covenant People, and become our God. to him be Glory in the Church by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world with [out] end. Amen.

"Dated ye 4th Oct., 1714.

"George Leonard, John Briggs, John Wetherell, Thomas Skinner, Peter Aldrich, Ephraim Grover, Joseph Donham, John Skinner, Israel Fisher, Thomas Grover, Nicholas White, Seth Dorman, John Hall."

¹ The term "orthodox," as used among the early Puritans, we think, meant simply what we mean by the word "congregational" at the present time. It was used to designate those who held to a particular form of church government and ordinances from those who differed from them in

The signing of the document is to be regarded only as a preliminary step to the full and complete organization of the church about three weeks later. The day of ordination, and of regularly constituting the church, at length arrived. On the morning of a day late in autumn were seen emerging from the woods, and coming through the by-paths, in every direction, men, women, and children, all seemingly centring to one point. Some, the more wealthy and aristocratic of the town, are on horseback, with their wives, and perhaps one or two children, on the pillion behind them. Others are on foot, carrying in one arm an infant, and leading with the other hand its older brother or sister. The whole town is astir, and strangers from the neighboring settlements are also moving towards the same central point. That point is the new meeting-house, not yet completely finished. The occasion of this unusually large gathering, and the precise date of it, we find by turning to the church-records. The first entry made therein, in the handwriting of the first minister, explains the whole matter. It is in these words, viz.: "A church was gathered in Norton on the 28th of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fourteen."¹ The names of "those who covenanted as members" are there given. They are the same as those who signed the covenant, Oct. 4; "and," says the record, "on the same day, Oct. 28, 1714, was ordained Mr. Joseph Avery as pastor of the church of Christ in Norton. He was the first minister in Norton. At his ordination, Rev. Samuel Danforth, of Taunton, gave the charge; and the Rev. Thomas Greenward, of Rehoboth, gave the

this respect. It was used by the Puritans to distinguish themselves from the Baptist, Presbyterian, and Quaker sects, &c. There certainly, in times past, was as much difference of theological opinion between those styling themselves "Orthodox," as we now find among those denominated "Congregationalists." In the former term were included Calvinists and Arminians; as, in the latter, are included Trinitarians and Unitarians. If the word "orthodox" was used in its legitimate sense,—meaning "sound in doctrine,"—one sect had as much right to claim it as another; for all sects honestly believe that their doctrines are sound.

¹ This was in Old Style. In New Style, the date would be Nov. 8, 1714.

right hand of fellowship." No mention is made of any other ministers; yet probably some others were present.

The above is every scrap of authentic history that has come down to us of the proceedings relative to the organization of the church and the settlement of a minister. Other persons, several of them the wives of the original members of the church, soon united with it; a deacon was chosen, &c.; of which we shall say more hereafter.

At quite an early period of our colonial existence, at the gathering of a church, those who proposed to join in covenant were required to make a declaration of their Christian experience. So also, for many years, for admission to a church already organized, a similar prerequisite was expected of candidates. The subsequent as well as the original members were required to express their assent to the covenant, and to give satisfaction concerning their faith. We give below one of these confessions, or "experiences" as they were sometimes called. The date of it is probably about 1743.

"I desire to bless God for that he hath cast my lot in a Gospel Land, whare I have the Glad tidings of a Saviour proclaimed in mine ears; and for that I haue the holy Scriptures to Read, & to direct me in the ways of God's comands. And I allso desiar to bless God for his Goodness to me, that I desended of such parents, who taught and instructed me, and gaue me up to God in mine infency in baptisem; which is an ordinance apinted by Christ to beleiuers and their infant seed. &, notwithstanding God's goodness to me, I haue sined against him. I therefore acknowledge, I deserues nothing from the hand of God but his wrath and indgnation to be poured out upon me. But I would bless his most holy name that he hath put it into my heart to be making my peace with him. I have had a desire for som time to come to the Lord's table; but, being in som measure sensible of my own unworthiness, I daust not, least, by coming unworthily, I eat and drink iudgment to myself. But I haue taken incouragement from the word of God to come up to this holy ordinance; as in marthew xi. 28, 'Come unto me, all ye that Labour and are heavy-Laden, & I will giue you rest;' John vi.

37, 'And he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' I desire to come hungering and thirsting after Christ, & to be putting my trust in him. I also desire to forsake all sin, as it is a braaking of God's holy & ius law. I also desire the prayers of this Church to God for me, that so I may become a worthy communicant at the Lord's table."

Jonathan Hodge

We have now told our readers all the facts we have gathered relative to the establishment of the gospel ministry in our town, with the exception of the erection of a house of worship, which we shall record in its proper place.

We have seen that a farm had been given the minister; that he had been assisted in the building of a dwelling-house, &c.: but we have said nothing relative to the occupation of his house by the pastor. Perhaps he kept a "bachelor's hall" for a time. Possibly he hired a housekeeper for a few years, till he could clear up his land, and lay by a little patrimony towards the support of a helpmeet and companion. There is no record or tradition that he had more than one wife; and hence we conclude that he waited till he was almost entitled to the first twenty acres willed him by Thomas Leonard, before he entered into the family relation. The minister's house, as we have said, was not finished for some years. But suddenly the people wake up to the importance of completing it. A town-meeting was held Aug. 4, 1719; and from the records of it we take the following extracts:—

"3ly, According to the warant for sd. meating for to Rayse monis for to finish the ministr's hous, acordingly Proseded to give twenty pounds by way of rate, & Sum by way of free-will ofring or Gift at sd. meeting.

"4ly, Voted to give ye minister twenty pounds for the finishing of his hous, to be raised on ye inhabitanc by way of rate. nicolas Smith, and Benjamin Williams, and Ebenezer Eddy, having given already, are to be Excepted in sd. act; and John

Briggs, gran. Sen., on his promis to Give Bricks, is Excepted also.

“ Nicolas Smith promised to Give Mr. Avery ten shilinds in two months, in money or grain, at money-price.

“ Ebenezer Eddy has given 0—5—0 already.

“ Benjamin Williams has given 0—10—0 already.

“ John briggs, Grand Sen., promis to give five shilinds' worth of good wether brick at the kill at John Gilbard's at taunton.

“ Nathaniel fisher promis to give ten shilinds in two months in worck.

“ John Newland, Sen., promis to give ten shilinds, — five in money, & five in worck.

“ John Austen promis to give ten shilinds, — five in money, & five in worck.

“ Thomas Skinner and his suns gives twenty shilinds, — ten in money, & ten in worck.

“ Uriah Leonard gives five shilinds by promis.

“ John briggs, Sen., promis to give twenty shilinds in worck in two months. Jeremiah Newland promis to give three shilinds in two months. John Harvey promis to give twenty shilinds (ten in money, & ten in worck) in two months. Joseph Hodges gave five shilinds money, & two pare of Hocks & hinges, at six shilinds' price, in two months. John Newland, sen., or benianin Newland, promis to give five shilinds in worck in two months. Jonathan Lincoln promis to lath the west Chamber. John Andrus promis to lath the East Chamber. John Hodges, sen., gives twenty shilinds in money Mr. avery oes said Hodges. Left. Nicolas White promis to give twenty shilinds money in two months.”

But what roused the people to take hold of this matter so earnestly? No doubt they have heard of the minister's frequent visits to Rehoboth, and they suspect it is not all out of pure friendship for Rev. Mr. Greenwood. Perhaps he had let drop a few words, that “ it was not good for man to be alone; ” or some “ busy-body ” from Rehoboth, if they had such folks in those days, might have reported that there was a little matrimonial speculation going on between the Norton minister and the great-grand-daughter of the first minister of Rehoboth. These are simply surmises on our part, and the reader must take them for what they are worth. On the town-books of Rehoboth is the follow-

ing entry, which certainly gives some foundation for the surmises just entertained:—

“Mr. Joseph Avery, of Norton, and Miss Sarah Newman, of Rehoboth, Published the 13th of August, 1720.”

It is evident now why the minister's house should be finished. The date of the marriage of Mr. Avery and Miss Newman I have not found. It probably took place, according to the usual course of things, about the 1st of September of the same year; but whether at Rehoboth or elsewhere, is unknown.

Mrs. Avery was the daughter of Deacon Samuel and Hannah Newman; grand-daughter of Samuel and Basha (Chickering) Newman; and, without doubt, the great-grand-daughter of Rev. Samuel Newman, one of the first settlers and the first minister of Rehoboth. She was born the 20th of November, 1700; and was consequently about thirteen years younger than her husband, and might have been one of his pupils when he kept school at Rehoboth.

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY SETTLERS.

“All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.”—C. LAMB.

In this chapter we shall give some account of the first settlers; all of whom, with but one exception, are known to have been here previous to or in 1711,—the year the town was incorporated. It is very difficult to ascertain where some of them lived; for the town was not laid out in regular lots; but the first proprietors took up land where it suited them best,—a piece of upland here, and a plat of meadow there: and, in subsequent divisions, their lots were not always bordering upon those previously occupied; so that, when we

ascertain where any particular man's lot lay, it is not certain that his house was on that lot. So far as we have been able to ascertain the location of the first houses, they were invariably built near to a stream or spring of water. Probably the old homesteads of some of the pioneer settlers are now covered with a growth of wood. The names of the settlers given in this chapter we find on the petition for a precinct; or the tax-bill to build Mr. Avery's house, already given; or on a tax-bill to build the first meeting-house, which we shall give in a subsequent chapter relating to meeting-houses. We can find but few gravestones to designate the spot where these men are buried, or to tell the exact dates of their death. This fact serves to corroborate the saying of Pope, —

“Who builds a church to God, and not to fame,
Will never mark the marble with his name.”

But few of the deaths of the early settlers are even recorded on our town-books. From the probate-books, however, at Taunton, we can approximate to the time of their departure. In most cases the will was proved, or an administrator appointed, within a few weeks succeeding the demise of the individual. For the sake of convenient reference, we have arranged, in alphabetical order, the names of the settlers, relative to whom we shall now give what few facts we have gathered.

PETER ALDRICH settled at the place where Isaac T. Braman now lives. He was one of the original members of the church. His wife was Experience —, married before 1702; and they had three children. Of his ancestry we know nothing. He was dead previous to March 16, 1724-5; for his wife was appointed administratrix of his estate on that day.

Deacon JOHN ANDREWS might have been the son of Henry and Mary (Deane) Andrews, who were married Feb. 17, 1685-6; and was born about 1686. He is supposed to have been a grandson of Henry Andrews, one of the first settlers of Taunton. He lived a short distance easterly of No. 3 Schoolhouse, where Mrs.

David Woodward now lives (?) ; and was, for several years, a deacon of the Congregational church of this town. He married Hannah —, and had five children. He died Jan. 28, 1763, in his seventy-seventh year. We here give his autograph, written in 1752.

John Andrews

JOHN AUSTIN was the son of Jonah Austin, jun., of Taunton ; and was born 1st July, 1671. He lived at the east part of the town, near the sawmill above Capt. T. Copeland's. His wife's name was Sarah —, and they had three or more children. When he died is unknown.

SAMUEL BAYLEY lived at the east part of Mansfield. He married, Aug. 28, 1711, Elizabeth Caswell, and had eight or nine children. He died previous to March 5, 1754.

THOMAS BRAMAN, Sen., might have been the son of Thomas, who, with his wife, were at Taunton, June, 1653.¹ But of his ancestry we are uncertain. He is supposed to have lived at the place now occupied by Allen D. Lane ; but at what time he settled there is unknown. He married Hannah Fisher, Jan. 20, 1685-6 ; and had nine, perhaps ten, children. He died June 7, 1709. His widow died Sept. 18, 1714.

THOMAS BRAMAN, Jun., is supposed to have been the son of Thomas, sen., just mentioned, and to have been born about 1686 ; but his name is not recorded with the other children of Thomas, sen. He was dead previous to May 1, 1725. We do not know in what part of the town he lived.

DANIEL BRAMAN was the son of Thomas, sen., and Hannah (Fisher) Braman ; and was born Oct. 11, 1688. He lived at the place where his father settled. He married, Nov. 25, 1714, Rachel Cambell (probably the first couple married in town by Rev. Mr. Avery),

¹ See Plymouth-Colony Records, vol. iii. pp. 37 and 38.

and had six (?) children. He died between May 22 and 28, 1753. His wife is supposed to have died in 1756, as her will was probated Nov. 29 of that year.

Deacon JOHN BRIGGS was the son of Richard and Rebecca (Haskins) Briggs, of Taunton, and was born Feb. 26, 1669 (70?). He is presumed to have lived near the Centre, as he used to sweep the meeting-house, and was several times chosen "Clark of ye Market." He is supposed to have been the man who was the first town-clerk of Norton. On the records he is sometimes called John Briggs the eldest, and sometimes grand senior. He married (probably second wife) Mary Burt, May 29, 1727. He was one of the original members of the church, and, for several years, deacon of the same; and died June 29, 1750, in his eighty-first year. We here give his autograph; at any rate, that of the first town-clerk.

John Briggs

JOSEPH BRIGGS (brother of Deacon John, last named) was born 15th June, 1674. He settled near where Laban Lincoln now lives. He married (perhaps his second wife), Oct. 20, 1718, Mehitable Hall; and had three children. He died previous to Dec. 18, 1751.

RICHARD BRIGGS was the brother of Deacon John and Joseph, just mentioned, and was born 12th January, 1679. He settled at the place recently owned by Dr. Leavet Bates, deceased; and his house is supposed to have stood where the Dr. Bates House now stands, directly in front of the Trinitarian meeting-house. His wife was Mercy, married about 1706 or 8; and they had four sons. He died about the 1st of January, 1733; as his will was proved Jan. 10, 1732-3.¹

¹ In the Centre Burying-ground we find the gravestones of Richard Briggs, and Mercy his wife, which say that he died October, 1741, in his fifty-fourth year; and that she died September, 1749, in her fifty-sixth year. We think the dates on these stones are erroneous. We can find traces of only one Richard Briggs, of Norton, so early, except the son of the one whose will was proved

Deacon JOHN BRIGGS, Jun., is supposed to have been the son of William and Sarah (Macomber) Briggs, of Taunton; and was born 19th March, 1680. He was doubtless the same person who was sometimes called John Briggs, second and senior. He probably lived in the easterly part of the town, and married, previous to 1713, Hannah Rocket. He may have been the man who married (for second wife?) Hannah Wetherell in 1721. His will was probated Aug. 26, 1756; and, in it, he mentions eight children. We presume he was the John Briggs, second, who was deacon of the church.

SAMUEL BRIGGS lived at the place now owned by Benjamin Sweet. Of his ancestry we know nothing. He married, July 27, 1692, Mary Hall, and had several children. He died about 1705 (?), and his widow married Benjamin Caswell.

Capt. SAMUEL BRINTNELL was the son of Thomas and Esther Brintnell (the first settlers of what is now Mansfield), and was born Dec. 2 (?), 1665. He lived at the homestead of his father, and was a very influential man in the early history of the town,—much employed in public affairs as selectman, and representative to the General Court. I am told by Mrs. Lucilda Brintnell, now ninety years old, that his first wife was Margaret Carpenter. When she died we know not. He had, before 1701, a second wife, Esther. She died Dec. 20, 1730. May 23, 1734, he married Mrs. Elizabeth Blake, of Wrentham. He died between Nov. 19, 1735 (date of will), and Jan. 14, 1735–6, when his will was probated. In his will, he names six children.

SAMUEL BRINTNELL, Jun., was the son of Samuel, just mentioned, and was probably born about 1690, and lived near the old homestead. His first wife was

in 1732–3; and he had no wife Mercy, and is known to have been alive many years subsequent to 1741. It will be noticed, that, on the gravestones of Richard and Mercy, the day of the month they died is not given. The date of Richard's death, as given on the gravestone, corresponds exactly with that of Richard whose will was proved 1732–3. No doubt Richard and wife had been dead so long before the stones were put up, that the dates of their deaths were forgotten, and thus the mistake was made.

Hannah ——. She died March 20, 1712-13. Dec. 22, 1726, he married Lydia Briggs, and had three children. His wife Lydia was appointed administratrix of his estate, Dec. 16, 1740.

SYLVANUS CAMBELL settled at the place now owned by Sanford Freeman, probably before 1700. His house is supposed to have stood between Mr. Freeman's and Benjamin C. Wetherell's. Of his ancestry we have learned nothing. His wife's name was Mary —, and he had fourteen children. His will was probated Sept. 1, 1718.

JOHN CASWELL, Sen., was the son of Thomas Caswell, of Taunton, and was born July 1, 1656. He settled at the east part of what is now Mansfield. He is supposed to have been the John Caswell who married Elizabeth Hall, Nov. 26, 1689. He had six children. His estate was appraised March 20, 1713-14.

JOHN CASWELL, Jun., was the son of John, just named, and was born July 19, 1690. He settled at the easterly part of Mansfield. He was a lieutenant in the expedition to Cape Breton in 1744-5; and was, no doubt, the Ensign Caswell mentioned in Major Joseph Hodges' company; and was soon promoted to the office of lieutenant. In the "Genealogical Register," vol. iv. p. 27, may be seen a letter from his wife to him while absent "in the king's service." Her name was Hannah, married before 1713; and they had ten children. He died 18th December, 1773. She died 6th July, 1769, in her eighty-first year.

BENJAMIN CASWELL was probably the son of Thomas, and the grandson of Thomas, sen., of Taunton, and was born Nov. 16, 1675. He probably lived somewhere in the east part of Mansfield. He married, March 17, 1706-7, Mary, widow of Samuel Briggs, and had five children by her. The date of his death is unknown.

JAMES CASWELL is supposed to have been the brother of Benjamin, and was born May 17, 1681. We know nothing more of him.

JOHN COBB might have been the son of John and

Jane (Woodward) Cobb, of Taunton, and was born March 31, 1678. He is supposed to have lived near where Albert Skinner now lives. His wife's name was Susannah. The leaf on which the births of his children were recorded in the town-records is lost. His son John was appointed administrator of his estate, Sept. 15, 1724.

WILLIAM COBB was, perhaps, a brother of John. He lived in the easterly part of the town. His wife was Mary Newland, married Feb. 11, 1694-5, and is supposed to have been a daughter of Jeremiah and Katherine Newland, of Taunton; for, Jan. 10, 1700-1, John Wetherell, William Wetherell, Jeremiah Newland, William Cobb, John Newland, Benjamin Newland, Anthony Newland, and Nicholas Smith, enter into an agreement relative to the property of said Jeremiah and Katherine, whom they call their father and mother.¹ I can find no account of children.

SETH DORMAN settled in the east part of what is now Mansfield. Of his birth and parentage we can learn nothing. He was probably from some town in Essex County, as there were Dormans in that vicinity. He was one of the original members of the church. He married Sarah Thayer, of Braintree, Aug. 13, 1715; and had six children. He died Dec. 21, 1741.

JOSEPH DUNHAM lived on Lockety Neck, easterly of the road leading from Elbridge G. Hunt's to the Copper-works. It is uncertain whether he was here as early as 1711 or not; but, as he was one of the original members of the church, we have honored him with a place in this chapter. He married Bethiah Chase, June 19, 1706; but no record of children has been found.

EBENEZER EDDY was the son of John and Deliverance (Owin) Eddy, of Taunton, grandson of Samuel and Elizabeth Eddy, of Plymouth, great-grandson of Rev. William Eddy, a nonconformist minister of Cranbrook, Kent County, England, and was born 16th May,

¹ Probate Records, vol. ii. p. 67, &c.

1676 (?). He settled near Crane's Depot; perhaps where John or Elijah Eddy live. He married probably, 1702, Mary Fisher (?); and had eight children. An administrator of his estate was appointed Dec. 4, 1756. His autograph was written in 1723.

Ebenezer Eddy

ELEAZER EDDY was a brother of Ebenezer, and was born 16th October, 1681. He lived on the place now owned by George B. Crane; and his house stood westerly of Mr. Crane's, near the road that leads to Daniel Gallegan's. He married, Feb. 6, 1722-3, Elizabeth Cobb, of Taunton; and had ten children. He was a carpenter. He died Dec. 8, 1739. There was an Eleazer Eddy who married Elizabeth Randall, March 27, 1701. It is possible that he was the man, and that Miss Cobb was his second wife.

JOSEPH ELLIOT lived at the east part of Mansfield. Of his ancestry we are ignorant. His wife was Hannah —, married before 1711; and they had seven children. He died in March or April, 1752.

SAMUEL FISHER was the son of Daniel and Hannah Fisher, of Taunton, and was born 3d December, 1669. He is supposed to have lived in the neighborhood of where Albert S. Tucker now (1858) lives. His wife Lydia was appointed administratrix of his estate, Oct. 20, 1724.

ELEAZER FISHER was the brother of Samuel; and was born 12th May, 1673. He lived near where Deacon Almond Tucker lived in 1855. He married Hannah Eddy, 24th December, 1696; and had ten children. He died between Nov. 16 and Dec. 3, 1750, when his will was probated. His autograph was written in 1727.

Eleazer Fisher

ISRAEL FISHER was born 27th March, 1680; and is supposed to have settled near his brothers, Samuel and Eleazer. He was one of the original members of the church. His wife's name was Susannah —, married before 1710; and they had five children.

NATHANIEL FISHER was a brother of those just mentioned, and was born 9th February, 1681. He probably lived near Barrowsville. He married Deborah —, about 1705; and had eight children. His will was dated March 27, and probated April 11, 1761.

THOMAS GROVER was the son of Thomas and Sarah (Chadwick) Grover, of Malden, and was born, according to records, March, 1668 (1669?). He settled near what is now West Mansfield. He and his brothers, Andrew and Ephraim, bought land in company, Nov. 14, 1702; and built their houses some forty or fifty rods apart, forming a sort of equilateral triangle. Thomas's house was where John T. Tobit now lives, on the road leading to the Christian Chapel. Andrew's house was where Rev. N. S. Chadwick now lives, on the road leading to Mansfield Centre; and Ephraim's house was on the road now leading to the Depot, at West Mansfield. Thomas married, July 29, 1697, Mary Cox; and had three children born at Malden, and three others at Norton.

ANDREW GROVER, the brother of Thomas, was born October, 1673. His wife's name was Mary —, married about 1697; and they had three children born at Malden, before removing to Norton, and seven afterwards. He is supposed to have died about 1751.

Deacon EPHRAIM GROVER, a brother of those previously mentioned, was born about 1675. He married in 1700, at Malden, Mary Pratt; and they had four (?) children. He was for some years deacon of the church in the North Precinct of Norton (Mansfield). He died Feb. 25, 1766.

JOHN HALL is supposed to have been the son of Samuel Hall, of Taunton, and born 19th October, 1666. He lived in the Mansfield part of Norton, near to Cobbler's Corner, probably on the east side of Rumford

River; and was, at one time, one of the owners of a gristmill near Cobbler's Corner. He married Elizabeth King, Dec. 17, 1696. He is supposed to have been the person who had a wife Esther in 1711, and a wife Ruth in 1720; and who married Sarah Welman, March 7, 1726-7. He was one of the original members of the church. He is supposed to have been dead previous to 1738. We here give his autograph, written in 1716.

John Hall

EBENEZER HALL was the brother of John, born 19th March, 1677. In what part of the town he settled, or what became of him, we are not informed. He (?) married Jane Bumpus, June 22, 1704.

NATHANIEL HARVEY has left behind him but very few traces. His wife's name was Susannah; and she was one of the first persons who called for aid from the town. There was some controversy between Norton and Taunton relative to her legal residence; but in April, 1713, the Court of Sessions decided that Mr. Harvey and his wife were inhabitants of Norton, and their relations were ordered to give assistance to Susannah.

JOHN HODGES was the son of John and Elizabeth (Macy) Hodges, of Taunton (grandson of William Hodges, who was at Taunton in 1643), and was born 5th April, 1673. He settled at the place where Noah Smith now lives; but his house was farther down towards the river. He was town-clerk for several years, and was much employed in transacting business for the town. He married Mary —, and had six children. He died Jan. 20, 1743-4. The autograph we give was written in 1739.

John Hodges

NATHANIEL HODGES was the brother of John, and was born 2d April, 1675. He settled at the place now

owned by Thomson Tripp; and his house stood back from the road, about midway from Mr. Tripp's to L. O. Makepeace's. He kept the first public-house (1712) in town of which we have any account. He married Hannah Dean, and had nine children. He died (?) 3d March, 1750. His wife died Jan. 3, 1768, in her eighty-fifth year.

SAMUEL HODGES was a brother of the above, and was born 20th May, 1678. He settled at the place easterly of J. O. Messenger's, now owned by D. and S. Holman, of Attleborough. He was much employed in town-affairs. He kept tavern, from 1713, seven or eight years. His first wife was Experience Leonard, married Dec. 31, 1700. She died Aug. 24, 1716. March 7, 1717, he married Mary Allen, of Taunton. She died 21st August, 1723. He had, by both wives, seven children; and died probably in April, 1725.

WILLIAM HODGES was also a brother of those just mentioned, and was born 6th June, 1682. He settled near the common graveyard, just beyond Austin Messenger's, where Rev. Joseph Palmer afterwards lived. His wife's name was Hannah Tisdale, married Feb. 8, 1710; and he had two children by her. She died 7th March, 1715, aged twenty-six. His second wife was — Clapp, and they had four children. He did not remain in town many years; but probably, on the death of his father in 1719, or soon after, removed to the old homestead in Taunton, where he is believed to have died June 23, 1766.

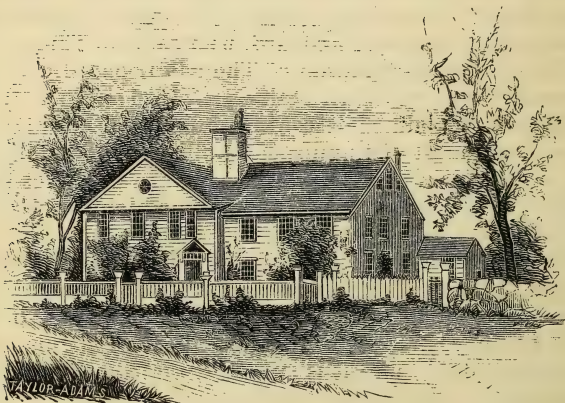
JOHN LANE was the son of Andrew and Tryphena Lane, of Hingham, and grandson of William Lane, who came to Dorchester from England (?) in 1635-6, and died about 1654. John Lane was a shoemaker; and married, June 18, 1674, Mehitable Hobart. She died at Hingham, Feb. 15, 1690. His second wife was Sarah —. About 1694, he came to Norton, and settled on the farm now owned by his descendant, George Lane, near the line of Attleborough, a part of his farm being in the latter town; and possibly he lived for a short time in Attleborough, as the birth of several of his

children are recorded in that town. He had twelve children ; and from him, through his son Ephraim, are descended all the Lanes now of Norton : but it is uncertain whether Ephraim was by the first or second wife ; but we think the former. He died Nov. 23, 1712. His gravestone says his age was sixty-two ; which would make him born in 1650. The Hingham record says he was born Jan. 20, 1648. Doubtless the gravestone is incorrect.

HON. GEORGE LEONARD, the son of Judge Thomas and Mary (Watson) Leonard, of Taunton, grandson of James and Margaret Leonard, who came to Taunton in 1652, and great-grandson of Thomas Leonard, of Pontypool, Wales, was born 18th April, 1671. This family of Leonards claimed descent from Lennard Lord Dacre, one of the most distinguished families of the nobility of the United Kingdom ; and descended in two lines from Edward III., through two of his sons, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Thomas Plantaganet, Duke of Gloucester. There appears to be some ground for this claim, from the fact that the *arms* of the Lennard and Leonard families were the same. Near the close of the last century, the last *Lord* Dacre, bearing the name of Lennard, died ; and it is supposed that the late Judge Leonard — who was a grandson of George, who first settled in Norton — could have claimed the title. At any rate, there was some consultation among the Leonards in this vicinity upon the propriety of claiming it ; but I am told the matter ended by the Judge saying that “he preferred to be *lord of acres* in America, rather than *Lord Dacre* in England.”¹ Whether descended from Lord Dacre or not, the subject of this sketch, and his descendants, lived very much in the style of the English nobility ; being the owners of an immense tract of land, and surrounded by their tenantry. Probably no family in New England were *lords* of more acres than the Norton Leonards. The ancestors of George Leonard

¹ For more particulars of the Leonard family than are given here, see Genealogical Register, vol. v. p. 403 and onward.

were interested in the iron-works, both in England and America; and, as we have already stated, he acted as the agent of his father, and uncle James, in setting up, in 1695, the first bloomery, or iron-forge, within the limits of our town. The house (built before 1700) in which George Leonard lived is still standing, and is said to have been the first *framed* house erected in town. We here give a picture of it as it now (1858) appears.



Judge Leonard House, built before 1700.

The L, on the right, is the original structure. The main body of the house is supposed to have been built, after the death of the first George, by his son George. The house is now owned by William, Don F., Charles D., and Oliver H. Lane, and others. Many of the venerable trees, which have surrounded the house and adorned the grounds for ages, have recently been despoiled by the woodman's axe; and thus the place has been shorn of much of its ancient grandeur. In 1707, the subject of this notice bought his uncle James's half of the iron-works and land; and in 1713, on the death of his father, came into the possession of the other half. He was the leading

man among the first settlers of Norton; one of the first board of selectmen; the first representative to the General Court; the first justice of the peace; and his name was first attached to the church-covenant. At the time of his death (Sept. 5, 1716), he held the office of major in the militia, and judge of the Court of Common Pleas. He married, 4th July, 1695, Anna Tisdale, daughter of John and Hannah (Rogers) Tisdale, of Taunton, and had eleven children, the last of whom was born after his death. His widow subsequently married Nathaniel Thomas, of Plymouth, and died September, 1733, aged sixty-one.

In a poem, published on the occasion of his death, he was styled "The prudent, pious, worthy, and worshipful Major George Leonard, Esquire."¹ We here give his autograph, written in 1713.²

George Leonard

BENJAMIN NEWLAND, the son of Jeremiah and Katherine Newland, of Taunton, was born about 1670 (?). He settled at the place now owned by Deacon A. D. Hunt. He married Sarah Leonard, July 23, 1702, and had two children. He married (second wife) Elizabeth Caswell, Nov. 29, 1716. He died in 1754. She died Nov. 4, 1739.

JOHN NEWLAND was a brother of Benjamin, and lived on the opposite side of the brook from where Thomas Copeland now lives. The leaf where a portion, at least, of his children's births were recorded, is lost. There were a John and Hannah Newland, who had five children, born between 1722 and 34. It is possible that he was the same individual; and Hannah might have been his second wife.

¹ See Judicial History of Massachusetts, by Hon. Emory Washburn, p. 368.

² As he had a son and a grandson bearing the same name as himself, who were leading men in the town and state, the three have been distinguished respectively as "Major" George, "Colonel" George, and "Judge" George Leonard.

JABEZ PRATT was, perhaps, the son of Jonathan, of Plymouth; born Nov. 1, 1673. He owned land near where Deacon Jason F. Alden lives, and was here as early as 1695. He married Elizabeth Cobb, Feb. 23, 1697-8, and probably died, or removed from town, soon after its incorporation. We here insert his autograph, written in 1695.

Jabez Pratt

WILLIAM PRATT has left few materials for a biography. The leaf where the births of his children were recorded is missing from the town-records. His wife Experience was admitted to Mr. Avery's church, Nov. 7, 1714; dismissed from the church at Weymouth.

EPHRAIM SHELDON settled in the westerly part of Mansfield. Of his pedigree we are ignorant. He had a wife, Jane —, married before 1709; and four or more children, a portion of whom were born in Norton. He early removed to Attleborough; and there we lose all traces of him.

ISAAC SHEPARD was the son of Thomas and Hannah (Ensign) Shepard, and was born at Charlestown in April or May, 1682. His father was first in Malden, then in Medford, Charlestown, and Brookline, and died at Milton. Isaac lived at the place now owned by Elkanah Wheeler, and came to Norton about 1707. He married Elizabeth Fuller, of Cambridge (?), Dec. 31, 1702; and had nine children. He died June 24, 1724; and from him, through his son Isaac, was descended the celebrated Miss Mary Lyon, the founder of the Mount-Holyoke Female Seminary at South Hadley.¹

THOMAS SKINNER, the son of Thomas and Mary (?) Skinner, and grandson of Thomas, who came from

¹ For this fact, and for most of the items relating to Isaac Shepard, I am indebted to Lucius M. Boltwood, Esq., of Amherst; who has a very complete history of the Norton branch of the Shepard family. He is the grandson of Rev. Mase Shepard, of whom we shall speak in another place.

Chichester, England, about 1650, and settled in Malden, was born November, 1668. He settled in the westerly part of the North Purchase, now Mansfield, as early as 1695; for his name appears as one of the proprietors of the North Purchase on a deed of land to Thomas and James Leonard, already mentioned. He is believed by some to have settled first in Wrentham, because some of his children's births are recorded there. He doubtless attended meeting at Wrentham, because it was much nearer than Taunton; but I am confident that he did not reside there. He was one of the original members of our church, and the first schoolmaster of Norton. He married Hannah Carpenter (?) about 1694, and had eight children. His will was made June 9, 1757, in his eighty-ninth year; and was probated May 19, 1750: so that he was in the ninetieth year of his age when he died. We here give his autograph, written in 1722.

Thomas Skinner

JOHN SKINNER was a brother, or perhaps only half-brother, of Thomas: for Mary, the wife of Thomas Skinner, died at Malden, April 9, 1671; and John was born April, 1673. He settled in the west part of the North Purchase about the time Thomas did; was a proprietor, and his name is attached to the deed of the proprietors to the Leonards. He was a member of our church at its organization. His wife's name was Sarah —, married about 1696; and they had seven children. He was living in 1738; but when he died is uncertain. There was a John Skinner who died at Wrentham, April 8, 1754; and he might have been the man. His autograph was written in 1695.

John Skinner

NICHOLAS SMITH was the "step-child" of Farmer Smith, of Taunton, and was born 21st February, 1672. He is supposed to have lived near where

Hathaway Leonard now lives. Before 1752, he moved to Taunton, and died there about the beginning of the year 1759. His first wife was Mercy Newland (?), married before 1713. She died Oct. 10, 1723. His second wife was Jerusha Leonard, married Jan. 21, 1724-5. By both wives, he had twelve children.

JOHN SMITH is supposed to have been the son of John and Jael (?) (Parker) Smith, of Taunton, and to have been born 6th December, 1680; but there is much doubt as to his paternity. There was a John Smith, jun., and Mary Briggs, of Norton, married Nov. 9, 1714.

THOMAS STEPHENS was the son of Richard Stephens, of Taunton, and was born 3d February, 1674. He is supposed to have lived near the centre of the town. In 1712, he had land laid out to him on Lockety Neck, near the junction of Rumford and Wading Rivers. He was one of the first board of selectmen. He married Mary Caswell, Sept. 28, 1699. I find no record of his children on the town-books; but three are buried in the Centre Burying-ground. He is supposed to have died soon after 1752. His autograph was written in 1716.

Thomas Stephens

ROBERT TUCKER lived between Barrowsville and John Harvey's, and is believed to have been there as early as 1698. We have learned nothing of his ancestry. His will was probated Feb. 16, 1724-5. His wife's name was Mehitable —, and they had six children.

WILLIAM WETHERELL was the son of the first settler of Norton, and was born about 1650 (?). He lived at the place where his father is supposed to have first "pitched" his habitation within the limits of Norton, near the outlet of Winneconnet Pond. From the first settler, through him, are descended the present William Wetherell, and William Wetherell, jun.; who are believed to be the seventh and eighth of this name in regular succession. He married, 1681, Elizabeth

Newland; and had four, and probably more, children. He died about 1729. His autograph was written in 1724.

William Wetherell

WILLIAM WETHERELL, Jun., was the son of William, last named, and grandson of the first settler. The date of birth is unknown. His wife Hannah, and child, late of Freetown, were warned out of Norton, July 20, 1729. He is believed to have had a son William and other children, probably by a wife previous to Hannah; but no records of his family can be found.

JEREMIAH WETHERELL was the son of William and Elizabeth (Newland) Wetherell; but when born is unknown. He lived at the east part of the town, and afterwards moved into Taunton. He married Rachel Basset, March 26, 1713. He subsequently had a wife Sarah. His will was probated July 7, 1752, and he names three children in it. We give his autograph, written in 1724.

Jeremiah Wetherell

JOHN WETHERELL was the son of William, the first settler, and was born in 1664. He settled at the place now owned by Thomas Copeland; and his house stood a few feet southerly, on the opposite side of the road from Mr. Copeland's house. He was an original member of the church, one of the first board of selectmen, and one of the leading men in the town. His wife's name was Susannah Newland (?), married about 1687, and they had eight children. His autograph was written in 1747; and he is supposed to have died soon afterwards.

John Wetherell

JOHN WETHERELL, Jun., the son of John, already mentioned, was born Oct. 8, 1688, and is said to

have been the first child born within the limits of Norton. He lived at the east part of the town, upon the old homestead. He married Hannah Brintnell (?) before 1715, and had five or more children.

Deacon NICHOLAS WHITE was the son of Nicholas and Ursilla (Macomber) White, of Taunton, and grandson of Nicholas, of Taunton,¹ and was born Feb. 3, 1675. He settled within the limits of Mansfield, close to the line between the old town of Taunton and the North Purchase, at the place where Charles N. Hall now lives, and is supposed to have built the house now occupied by Mr. Hall. He was one of the most influential men in the town; being the first town-treasurer; for eleven years, one of the selectmen; a representative to the General Court, and the first deacon of the church, &c. His wife was Experience King, married June 2, 1703; and they had nine (?) children. He died Sept. 2, 1743, and was buried on his own farm, a few feet northerly from the front-door of Nehemiah Hall's house; but no stone marks the spot, and the ploughshare has again and again disturbed the soil beneath which his body rests. Ought this to be so? We give his autograph, written in 1727.

Nicholas White

MATTHEW WHITE was a brother of Deacon Nicholas, and was born Oct. 25, 1676. He lived not far distant from his brother, in Mansfield. He married Susannah Hall, July 10, 1710. For second wife, he married Damaris Deane (about 1715), and had four children. The date of his death we have not found.

EDWARD WHITE lived at the east part of the town; but we can learn nothing of him, except that he married Rebecca Wetherell, May 3, 1710.

Deacon BENJAMIN WILLIAMS was the son of Joseph and Elizabeth Williams, of Taunton, grandson of

¹ He is supposed to have been the same person, made a freeman in 1642, who married Susannah, daughter of Jonas and Frances Humphrey, and was at Dorchester in 1652.

Richard and Francis (Dighton) Williams, and was born 15th October, 1681. He settled, about the time of his marriage, at the northerly part of Mansfield, near where Benjamin Williams (his descendant) now lives, close by the Providence Railroad. He was much employed in town-affairs; and, for some years, was deacon of the North-Precinct (Mansfield) church. He married Elizabeth Deane, Dec. 4, 1707, and they had nine children. He died Jan. 10, 1757. His wife died March 18, 1758. His autograph was written in 1723.

Benjamin Williams

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MINISTRY OF REV. JOSEPH AVERY.

"Alas! how light a cause may move
Dissension between hearts that love!"

MOORE.

MR. AVERY'S ministry was far from a peaceful one, as will be seen in the pages that follow. We give what facts we have been able to gather from a few scattered papers collected from various sources.

For about four years after his settlement, we hear of no schisms or difficulties in the church to create ill feelings among its members, or to impair the usefulness of the pastor. But the serpent was not idle: he was creeping stealthily around the fold; ready, upon a favorable moment, to spit forth his venom. The opportunity soon came, — probably in the latter part of the year 1718. Some difficulty arose between Mrs. Anna Leonard (widow of the late Major George Leonard, deceased) and her son George on the one side, and the assessors of Norton on the other, about the rates.

From the town-records, it appears that Mrs. Leonard and her son considered themselves overrated. They and the assessors could not agree about the matter. The difficulty was carried to court for adjustment. The court made an abatement of £7. 10s. 8d. of Mrs. Leonard's tax. The town refused to pay the assessors' charges for contesting the matter at the court, &c.¹

In all such difficulties, each party generally has its friends and adherents, who make common cause with them. Such was, no doubt, the fact in this instance. The contest seems to have waxed warm, and spread quite extensively. It soon found its way into the church. Accusations and insinuations, and many other unchristian imputations, were, no doubt, the

¹ Since writing the above, I have found the decree of the Supreme Judicial Court relative to the matter, made at Boston, Sept. 12, 1721; and we lay it before the reader:—

“John Hodges, John Wetherell, and John Skinner, assessors of the town of Norton in the year 1719, appellants, *vs.* Anna Leonard, Samuel Brintnell, and George Leonard, all of said Town, Appellees from the Order or sentence of a Court of General Sessions of the Peace, held at Bristol, for the County of Bristol, by adjournment, on the first wednesday of August, 1720. Whereas, at a Court of General Sessions of the Peace, held at Bristol on the second Tuesday of January last, the said Assessors of Norton were complained of by the now Appellees for not Easing them in their Rates, made for defraying the charges of the sd. Town in the year 1719, in which said rates was Included twenty Pounds for finishing the Minister's house, and also his salary; and, upon hearing the matter, the Court Ordered the aforesaid Rates to be set aside; and the said Assessors were ordered to new-make sd. Rates, and commit them to the constable, as by the copy of the Court's Order on file appears. and, complaint having been made to the sd. Court of Sessions that the order of Court hath not been complied with, sundry orders were issued out to cite the said Assessors to appear to answer for their non-compliance with the aforesaid order; and, they not being to be found, the said Court ordered that the Clerk issue out a warrant to apprehend the said assessors, in order to their becoming bound by Recognizance to appear at the said adjournment of Court, in August, 1720, to answer as well for their contempt as for not complying with the Court's order; when they appeared, and gave reason why they had not complied therewith; viz.: Because they heard the Parties, that had Complained of said Rates, said they would complain again. But, for their offence, the Court then ordered them to pay a fine of forty shillings, and cost of Court; who then moved for an appeal from the said Court's order, but were denied. And the said appeal is now brought forward by order of the Great and General Court; and, after a full hearing of both parties, It is considered by the court, that the said Court's order, or Sentence, be, and hereby is, Reversed; and that the app'ls. go without day; and that all Bills of cost taxed against the town of Norton be, and hereby are, Declared void, and of no Effect.” *

* Supreme-Court Records, from 1721-25, p. 19.

cause of many lamentations on the part of those who wished to greet every one they met with the gospel salutations of "Peace be unto you;" "Let brotherly love continue." To use a common yet expressive phrase, the church was soon "up in arms," and had each other "by the ears."

It was, no doubt, the trouble growing out of this affair, that induced the church to pass the following vote: —

"July 27th, 1719. — At a Church-meeting, the church did then approve of the Platforme of Church Discipline; and did agree, by vote, to Practise according to the Rule of it."

John Skinner, one of the assessors making the rate objected to, seems to have been the "bellweather" of the opposition to Mrs. Leonard and son. He accused them of lying, and gave wings to other slanderous reports.

The church did not probably approve of the course he pursued. This inflicted a wound upon his pride, and he absented himself from the holy ordinances of Christianity; or perhaps he did this because he could not in conscience commune with those he deemed guilty of falsehood and other unchristian practices. But, whatever might have been the cause of his non-attendance upon the ordinances, the church, in order to bring him to repentance, suspended him from their fellowship. But, as is generally the case, this suspension did not send the arrow of sorrow and repentance to his heart. Instead of allaying, it rather increased, the flame.

The pastor at length became implicated in the criminations. Something decisive must now be done, or the church will be broken up. The advice of a council of five churches is invoked; and all parties agreed to abide by their decision. The churches, convened by their pastors and messengers, were Rev. Peter Thatcher's, of Middleborough, who was moderator of the council; Rev. John Danforth's, of Dorchester; Rev. Joseph Baxter's, of Medfield; Rev. John Swift's,

of Framingham; and Rev. Richard Billings's, of Little Compton, R.I.

The result or decision of the council, I have been fortunate enough to find. It is a long document; but, as it throws more light upon the whole matter than can be obtained from any other source, we give it entire:—

“After solemn Invocation of the Divine name, &c.,—

“A Publick hearing of all Parties, the Council of 5 Churches convened at Norton, novem. 13, 1722.

“I. That by the Letters, that required us to assemble in Council at Norton, we were notified that mr. John Skinner, a Brother in full Communion, had a Complaint to offer to Consideration, & that some questions might be proposed for Resolution, and all in the Chh. had agreed & resolved to be determined by the Judgment & Advice yt should be offered them by the Council; and that we take notice with great Thankfulness to God and our Lord Jesus Christ, & look upon it as a Token for good, and would hope yt ye Lord hath graciously began to prepare them for ye great blessings of Peace and union, which, we pray to God, may be restored unto them.

“II. That an occasion of the great altercations was an exception taken att some applycations made to the Court; and that, in one of ym, madm. Leonard and her son made an averment to the Court, In the Complaint of over-ratement, yt an abatement of the Rates had been refused by ye Assessors. now, wee find that the assessors did not refuse to make an abatement, if it could be demonstrated to them to be their duty to make it; but, their delay of making it till the court came to sit being by Legal construction and denomination a refusal, they used it [as] the Legal term of Refusal in the said complaint to the court. now, brother Skinner, not So thurly considering the Leagle Sence of the word Refusal, but understanding it according to the acceptation and use of it in Common talk, apprehended to import a scandlus falshod, Charging the Said mad. Leonard & her son with lying, & procuring some delays to the admission of young mr. L. to ye Lord's Table; & on yt account absenting himself also, perhaps about 2 years, from ye L. T., because ye chh. did not see cause of chh. Dealing with md. L. & her Son for sd. apprehended lying. In all which we Judge our Br. Skinner to have been

in the wrong, and ye chh. to have been in ye right ; nor can we find any weight at all in his pleas, either for forcing the matter into debate in ye chh., then ready for ye eruption of the flame of strife, or for ye extenuating of, much less for the absolving him from, ye Fault condemned by our Synod (Platform, Chap. 14, Sec. 9), of ye absēting himself from ye communion of ye chh. at the L. S.

“ III. That, our B. Skinner having declared unto some his resolution not to return to the Communion untill the chh. would deal with madm. Leonard & her son for lying, wee find the Revd. Pastor proposed to the chh., whether the chh. should not bear testimony against his fault by suspending him from the Lord’s Supper, in hopes, by divine blessing, to be a means to recover him to a better frame ; and the chh., all that were then present of the fraternity, excepting two persons, consented and agreed to the proposal, and that the suspension was pased in ye chh., not by lifting of the hands, but by a silential vote. The usual method amongst us hath been, that altho’ offences have been open and long continued, & altho’ it [is] known yt most of the chh. are greatly offended at the same, yet, before the suspension has been voted, the offender hath been cited to appear before ye chh. (the chh. being in peace) to show Cause & Reason (if any there be) why he should not have been suspended from ye Ld’s. Supr. for his open fault, wherein he obstinately continued ; and we beleve yt our Practice therein is according to ye rule, and ye conterary is Irregler. and we understand yt ye Reson why ye Like method was not taken with brother Skiner was, yt it was supposed by ye Reverend Pastor and some others, yt if ye sd. Brother Skiner had been Solemly Cited to appear before ye church, having strong adherants, it twould have Prøduced uncomfortable clamor, violent Eritations, Exacerbations, unworthy Reflections, and a terable increase of ye flames of Strife, to ye high disoner of God and mischief of soles, which ye Pastor was unwilling to open ye dore unto ; and ye Rather Becase Grevios Reflections mad upon him, and at a Certain fast had asked ye sd. Brother Skiner ye Reson of his withdrawment, and sd. Brother Skiner Gave him two Resons : one of ym was ye Churche’s way of Baptising ; and ye other was ye chh’s. Refusing to deel with madam Leonard and her Sone for leying, in a petition to ye Court, before mentioned. however, if such a case should hapen againe, so daingeres to sett a church on fire, our advice would be yt ye chh.

should not Proceed without ye Presance and advice of a council of chhs.

“ However, we are of ye opinion yt ye chh. hath not dispended no grater sencer to Brother Skinner than his falt deserved, if yt ye vote for it, tho’ a silential vote, was a firm and Good vote; and we, in Some cases in our chhs., do make silenciall votes: and, in Sundry cases, we judge it to be ye best way of voting, conducing most to ye Glory of God, ye Peace and Good of ye chh.

“ IV. As to ye Revd. Pastor, his redress to ye revd. & aged Pastor of taunton for advice, or at any time to ye revd. association, wee juge that therein he acted prudently and according to the rules of the holy word of god, and agreeabl enough to our Platform of chh. desipline.

“ V. It apears not to us yt ye revd. mr. Avery, the Pastor, hath been guilty of any Criminal partiality in his conduct in this affair, but he hath been unreasonably charged with it, & reproached for it, & unworthly treated and put to greif on that account; nor can we find any one of the sundry allegations, exhibited against him as criminal, sufficiently evidenced; nor can wee judge him or believe him criminal therein.

“ VI. It is our judgment, that baptizing according to the advice of ye synod that met at Boston anno Dom. 1662 is according to the word of God, & we believe is pleasing in his Sight, and yt Br. Thomas Skinner ought to attend ye rules in ye synod for the Baptism of his children.

“ VII. As we have been informed, there hath been an ordinance of parliament, that no confession of any party, made to or before any presbitery, Consistory of chh., shall be excepted or Improved in any Court of civil Justice against any person whatsoever: so we judge it unreasonable and unchristian yt any Person or Persons Shall Prosecute in ye Law or other ways any singell evedence, or any Singell Person, who hath Given testimony before ys councell; as singell evedence, interrogated by sivell authority, and sworne, is not Liabell to be cast in any action of Defamation, meerely because he is a singell evidence. for Singel evedences, Interogated by a solemn Councell of churches, and called upon to speak to any particular, we think ought not to be Prosecuted in ye law, because they are singell evedences: and such Prosecuting of any witnesses whomesoever, who have testified before ys councill, we believe will tend to continew or Revive ye flames of

strife, and be a means of Preventing ye speedy and stedly peace which is greatly desired; and therefore we declare against it.

“VIII. Our judgment is, yt ye Teaching Elders, together with ye Ruling Elders, if ye chh. have any, ought to Inquire into ye Knoledg and experence of such as desire to joyne in full communion with ye chh., and of such as desire to lay hold on ye covenant, before they be Propounded to ye church.

“IX. It's most eligabell that complaints, evedences, and confessions be given in unto ye Pastor in writing, and by him communicated (If he judg fit) to ye church, to be further sifted by Proper Interogatories if need be.

“X. We think ye Pastor and other Elders, or, in want of Elders, ye Decons or other Princeple members, may have ye first cognicence of cases, and yt they should Issue such as they find Isuabell by them acording to Scripture Rule; and yt they are not bound to give ye chh. ye first hearing of every case, or of any case; yea, of many cases, not to give them ye Publick hearing of them at all.

“XI. As for Brother John Skinner, we Judg yt he ought to humble himselfe before God and our Lord Jesus Christ for his hard words against and charges upon his Revd. Pastor and ye chh., and for his long and disorderly withdrawment from ye communion of ye chh. at ye Lord's table; and confes his falt to them, and promise Reformation and an harty union with them for time to come. and thareupon we, in the Bowells of Christ, advise and intreat ye Rev. Pastor and chh. to forgive him, and restore him to their Intire Kindness, Charity, and communion; and yt ye whole chh. be sensibell of & sorowfull for ye many sins and failings which, upon a strict Review of ye offensious words and actions, they may severally find ymselves chargabell withall, and make fresh applications of ye blod of yr ahd our Glorious Redeemer, by faith, for ye Purifying of their consciences; that unto ye God of Peace, through ye Lord Jesus, they offer up their incessant supplications for Pardone, and for ye Restoration and Perpetuation of ye mutual Peace and Love and edefication. and in ye dredfull name of ye etarnal Sone of God, and Head of ye chh., we solemnly Charge all ye Good People and yr children and sarvants in ys Place, yt they love and honour ye worthey Pastor of ye chh., ye Revd. mr. avery, and earnestly pray for him, and do theyr utmost endever for his Peace, comfort, and good subsistance among them; and labour to ye utmost that

they may all be Profetable Hearers of ye word of ye Lord, dispenced by him. and we pray God yt our advice may be acceptable to ye saints and People of God in Norton, and Profetable to them; and that he will graciously bless them all with Peace and holiness, and with his Grate salvations. Amen.

"SAMPL. HOW (?).	PETER THACHER, Moderator.
ISAC CLARK.	JOHN DANFORTH.
GEORGE BARBER.	JOSEPH BAXTER.
JONATHAN CLAP.	JOHN SWIFT.
WILLIAM PEABODIE.	RICHARD BILINGS.
DANIELL PRESTON.	
MANASSAH TUCKER.	JONATHAN GULLEVER.
JOHN WODSWORTH.	ELEZER WHELOCK."

In obedience to the decision of the council, Mr. Skinner makes confession in these words:—

"I, John Skinner, have had a Strong opinion, that ye charge upon ye Assessors, yt they had Refused an abatement of madam Leonard and her son's rates, was a false charge; but, ye Councill of Churches haveing otherwise determined, I do Submit to and aquies in their determinations. and ye sd. holy Council of chhs. haveing Judged yt I ought to humble myselfe before God and ye Lord Jesus Christ for my hard words against and charges upon my Reverend Pastor and ye chh., for my long disorderly withdrawment from ye Communion of ye chh. at ye Lord's table, and Confes my fault to them, and Promice Reformation and Harty union with them for time to come; besides what I, in comon with other good people in Norton, am exhorted to, and charged to love and Honour my worthy Pastor, ye Revrd. Avery, and earnestly Pray for him, and to do my utmost endeavour for his Peace, Comfort, and good subsistance in Norton; and that I will labour to ye utmost yt I may be a Profitable hearer of ye word of ye Lord dispenced by him,—I do acordingly humbell myself for my hard words against and charges against my Revrd. Pastor and ye chh., and for my long and disorderly withdrawment from ye communion of ye chh. in norton; and I do Pene- tently confes I have ben very falty tharein; and I ernistly beg Pardon thereof at ye hand of God and of ye Lord Jesus Christ, and ask forgiveness also at ye hand of my Revd. Pastor, mr. avery, and of ye chh. in norton: and Promise, by ye Grace and Help of ye Eternall Sperit, to Reforme to ye time

to come, and to Performe my duty to ye Revrd. Pastor and chh., to God, and to my own soul, yt ye Councell of chhs. at Norton has advised in yr Result, Dated November 13, 1722; nor will I be an Incendiary of strife in norton; nor will I Bring my Pastor or others to an uneasenes by complaining of and finding falt with any words spoken in ye sd. Counsell, or Bringing in of any charges or testimonies against me or any others; and Pray to be Relesed from ye eclesasticell suspencion.

“JOHN SKINER.”

Thus the breach was apparently healed; the outward flame was quenched. But we fear there are yet some smouldering embers of discord, that will ere long burst forth, to the injury of the pastor, if not the church. We shall see further on.

In order that all may have a full understanding of subsequent events for a few years in the church history, it is necessary that the different grades of church officers should be explained.

There were early, in many of the New-England churches, four sets of officers, who exerted not a little influence in the community. These were, first, pastors; second, teachers; third, elders; fourth, deacons. From an article in the “American Quarterly Register” for 1840 (p. 37), it appears that —

“Pastors and teachers were formerly two distinct officers, but, in some of the New-England churches, were quite early united in one. The distinction was founded upon Eph. iv. 11; Rom. xii. 7, 8; &c. According to the Platform, ‘The pastor’s special work is to attend to *exhortation*, and therein to administer a word of *wisdom*: the teacher is to attend to *doctrine*, and therein to administer a word of *knowledge*.’ Thomas Hooker declares the scope of the pastor’s office to be to work upon the will and affections; that of the teacher, ‘to inform the judgment, and to help forward the work of illumination in the mind and understanding, and thereby to make way for the truth, that it may be settled and fastened upon the heart.’”

It seems from this that the pastor’s duty was to preach; the teacher’s, to catechize.

“Many of the first settlers of New England regarded the office of *ruling elders* as of divine institution; and appealed to 1 Tim. v. 17, and other passages, as warranting this persuasion. They were *elders* in common with the pastor and teacher; and as it was their duty to assist the teaching officers or officer in *ruling*, or conducting the spiritual affairs of the church (in admitting, for instance, or excluding members, inspecting their lives and conversations, preventing or healing offences, visiting the sick, and administering occasionally a word of admonition or exhortation to the congregation), they obtained the name of *ruling elders*. Ruling elders were anciently ordained, and were sometimes addressed by the appellation of *reverend*. The place of the ruling *elders* in the congregation was an elevated seat between the deacons’ seat and the pulpit.”¹

The practice of having ruling elders was not uniform in the New-England churches. Some had them; others did not. They were longer retained in the churches than teachers, as distinct from pastors. When chosen, they were usually taken from among the deacons; selecting that one who, for his gravity, eminent piety, and other special gifts, was deemed worthy to be advanced to a higher position. When a vacancy was thus caused in the deacons’ seat, it was filled by choosing some one from the body of the church. It was also a practice in some churches, and continued till about the commencement of the present century, to ordain deacons. I cannot learn that their ordination conferred upon them any powers they did not possess before. I am informed by a gentleman of great antiquarian knowledge,² that it was also “allowable for churches to have widows, or deaconesses, particularly to visit the sick.” We will also state, that it was a custom to allow some persons to own or renew the covenant, who were not admitted to full church membership. The owning or renewing of the covenant gave them the privilege of having their children baptized, but did not admit them to the communion-table.

¹ American Quarterly Register, 1840, pp. 40, 41.

² Rev. J. B. Felt, of Boston.

Hence some who renewed or owned the covenant were never communicants. Keeping these facts in mind, we will pass over some ten or twelve years of church history, and then lift the curtain again.

Rumors are in motion, that Mr. Avery does not rule the church after the manner of the Church Discipline; and by way, no doubt, of refreshing his memory, some of the members contrive to have a church-meeting called for the reading and re-adoption of the Platform as their guide in church discipline.

The record says, —

“The Church thought it necessary (inasmuch as there were more members belonging to the church then formerly, and many of them never had read, or heard the said Platforme Read) that it should be Read at the Church-meeting on the 5th of Sept., 1734, and that the Church should Renew their vote to Practice according to the Rule of it; and, accordingly, sd. Platforme of Church discipline, agreed upon by the synod assembled at Cambridge, 1648, was Read, and they did by vote manifest it, that they did unanimosly approve of said Platforme, or the substance of it, and agree to Practice according to the Rule of it.”

This clause, “or the substance of it,” shows that it was not, even by themselves, very strictly construed at this time.

There are some restless spirits who are not satisfied with the state of things in the church, and think something must be done, — they hardly know what. It occurs to them that the deacons of the church have never been ordained; and forthwith they get up the following petition: —

“To the Revd. Mr. Joseph Avery, &c.

“We, the subscribers, do thus say, that threw the Goodness and Mercy of God to us of this town of Norton, yt there hath ben a Congregational church gethered, and yourself ordained the pastor; and we have hitherunto Injoyed ye means of Grace and ye ordinances of Christ, according to his own institution, peaceably unto this day; which call for the thankfulness from us of this church. but, notwithstanding the marceys we have Injoyed, we have hetherto lived Either in the

neglect or a willfull omission of the emprovement of one speciall priviledge, which our Lord Jesus Christ hath purchast for us, perticular ye ordination of Deacons: for although ye Church hath Chose Deacons first, second, or third, yet they only stand on probation; and so ye church do still Remain not yet compleated with officers acording to scripture and platform. therefore we do desire yt one or more of ye Deacons, such as yourselfe and ye Church shall think fitt, may be ordained; and yt another Deacon may be chosen, which we understand is of necessaty. all which we desire might be accomplished before the next sacrament. and, to say no more, we hope you will grant our desires. we remain your loveing Brethren.

“Dated in NORTON, September 25th, 1736.

“GEORGE LEONARD.	JOHN WILD.
JOHN WETHERELL.	JOHN BRIGGS, 2nd.
JOSHUA POMROY.	EPHRAIM LANE.
SAMLL. CLAP.	WILLM. STONE.”
JOHN AUSTIN.	

I should judge from this that they wished the deacons to be ordained to the position of ruling elders.

Mr. Avery is opposed to this measure, and hence takes no efficient means to forward their desire.

A year went by, and they find another source of dissatisfaction. The minister is guilty of admitting persons to own the covenant without a vote of the church, and they address him as follows:—

“To the Revd. mr. Joseph Avery, Pastor of ye 1st Church of Christ in Norton, Greeting.

“We the subscribers, being members in full communion in sd. Church, are humbly of ye opinion, that there ought not to be taken into ye Church any members without their owning ye covenant in Publick: therefore we do protest and declare against it, and desire that practise may not be any longer followed in this Church. we also are of ye opinion, that persons ought not to be taken into, or under ye watch and care of, the Church, without a clear vote of ye church for it; and therefore think that takeing into, or under ye watch or Care of, ye Church, without the vote of ye Church for ye Same, cannot

be Justified by ye word of God, nor the platform of Church discipline; which, you may Remember, we of this Church have voted for our rule of discipline: therefore we do protest against any further proceeding in that affair, without a plain vote of the Church for it. and your compliance herein will very much oblige us.

“Dated NORRON, May 30th, 1737.

“John Briggs, 2nd, George Leonard, Ephraim Lane, Willm. Makepeace, Jonathan Newcombe, 2nd, Joshua Pomroy, John Wild, Willm. Ware, Ephraim Dunham, John Austin, John Wetherell, Benjamin Cobb.”

What was the result of this petition, I have no means of determining. For a few years, I find nothing to indicate the course of events that transpired. The confession and votes that follow may throw some light upon the state of affairs at that time, and perhaps explain *one* cause of strife in the church; for, when persons are guilty of such practices as are here confessed, they are apt to get into difficulty. It shows, however, that there was a noble heart within the weak flesh: —

“Upon ye 24 day of october last past, in ye county of Suffolk, I do own and acknoledg yt I did drink to much strong drink, so yt I was disguised thareby, to ye dishonnor of God and my holy profession; for which I am hartly sorry for my dishonouring of God and my holy profession: and if I have at any time given offence to any by word or action, or by being disguised with drink at any time wtsoever, I am sorry for it. and I do hartily and willingly take shame to myself for my drinking to excess; for I know it is sin. I pray ye church to receiv this my confession, and forgive me my offence to them, and pray to God for me that he would pardon this and all my other sins; and I pray the Chh. to extend their charity towards me so far as not to think I allow myself in any one known scandalous sin. also my earnest desire is yt ye chh. would dismiss me from ye office and service of a Deacon of ye chh. for ye future.

“Dated NORRON, november 2, 1745.

“JN. BRIGGS, 2nd.”

“December 18th, 1745. — Att a chh.-meeting, Regularly appointed by the Pastor of the chh., according to the Desire

of Deacon John Briggs, the second, ye chh. voted his dismission from ye office and service of a Deacon of ye chh. for ye future."

"December 22nd, 1745. — The above-written confession of Deacon John Briggs, the second, was read to the chh.; and the chh. voted their acceptance of the same."

How much "strong drink" had to do with the unhappy state of affairs about to distract the church, we can, of course, only conjecture; but sure we are, that, after the lapse of a little more than a year, the pastor is served with the following document, which intimates that the church was (spiritually considered) in a bad condition: —

"To the Reverend Pastor of ye first Church of Christ in Norton.

"We, being under apprehension of ye frowns of God's providence on this church in permitting such Divisions and seperation amongst us as have hapned to us of late, — which we think to be the tokens of God's Displeasure towards us, — wherefore we, your Brethren and humble pertitioners, Request that you appoint a Church-Meeting forthwith, where the Church may come together, in order to read ye Platform of Church Discipline, and vote it again if they think it proper; and, further, to consult what measures are best to be taken in order to Regulate those disorders that are amongst us at the present Day. — Dated norton, february 6, 1747.

"John Briggs, 2nd, Benjamin Cobb, Benjamin Hews, Gideon Basset, Willm. Codington, John Guilbert, Ephrm. Lane, John Briggs, Jacob Newland, Josiah Newland, Seth Smith, John Austin, Jeremiah Cambel."

We can find no record of the proposed church-meeting; but it is presumed that even the reading of the Platform of Church Discipline did not heal the divisions and ill feelings then raging in the bosom of the church. Strange that it never occurred to these men, that the best church discipline is the humble and forgiving spirit of Jesus!

Frequent church-meetings for the discipline of members are always ominous of evil, and show that the

first great requisite of a Christian life — viz., *love* — is wanting somewhere. Even church-members are subject to passions and prejudices like other men; and, when once they become embroiled in local strifes and feuds, they are very apt to lose the spirit and temper of their divine Master, and thereby increase instead of diminishing the flames of dissension. The following record shows a most lamentable state of affairs in the church; shows that criminations and recriminations are rife; shows, to some extent, the dissatisfaction of a portion of the church with the pastor; and also the means used — not adequate, however, to the end desired — to heal the fast-widening breach: —

“A chh.-meeting was appointed by ye Pastor of ye chh., to be on ye 17th of June, 1747, at ye publick meeting-house, at one a'clock in ye afternoon, for ye following reasons; viz.: 1st, yt ye chh. might consider what their duty is, and discharge their duty, with respect to Sarah Campbel, ye wife of Gershom Campbel, for her offence in withdrawing from communion with ye chh.; and yt ye chh. might Inquire into ye report, and be rightly Informed concerning a report, of her denying what she had said concerning her going to hear Mr. Avery preach; viz., yt she would sooner burn at ye stake than go to hear mr. avery preach, &c.

“2. To lay before ye chh. John Finney's, sen., Reasons of dissatisfaction with ye Pastor and chh., and what can be proved yt he said at ye time when he desired ye pastor to appoint a chh.-meeting; and yt the chh. may consider what their duty is, and discharge their duty, with respect to said John Finney, sen.

“3. That ye chh. might Inquire and be rightly Informed with respect to what James Briggs had said concerning Mr. White's preaching, and Consider what yr duty is, & discharge their duty, with respect to sd. James Briggs; and also that ye chh. might consider what their duty is, & discharge their duty, with respect to those persons that have kept a meeting at ye house of James Briggs upon ye sabbath, & held communion with persons of a neighbouring town In ye performing Divine worship and service; namely, prayer, &c. Concerning whom it is reported yt they have disorderly seperated from communion with ye chh. y. y. belong to.”

“Att the chh.-meeting on ye 17th of June, 1747, —

“1. The chh. voted that sister Sarah Campbel should be suspended from Communion with ym at ye ordinance of ye Lord’s Supper, for her refusing to acknowledge she was guilty of offence in withdrawing from communion with ye chh. without sufficient reasons, and before she had laid before ye chh. ye Reasons of her dissatisfaction.

“2. The chh. voted that Brother John ffiney, sen., should be suspended from communion with ym at ye ordinance of ye Lord’s Supper, for his refusing to acknowledge he was to blame for saying ye chh. was not settled according to Gospel Rule, and yt he did not like recieving members into ye chh. without certainly knowing y. y. were not hypocrites, and yt ye chh. was settled on ye same principles as ye chh. of Room, & that ye chh. worshipped God falsly and by Images, and all ye difference was they did not set up Images before their eyes; and that he would as soon join with the chh. of Room as with this chh. The chh.-meeting on ye 17th of June, 1747, was adjourned to be on ye 14th of July, 1747, to be at ye publick meeting-house.”

“Att the chh.-meeting on ye 14th of July, 1747, —

“Several members, yt were dissatisfied with ye Pastor and chh., gave in yr. Reasons of dissatisfaction with ye pastor and chh. in writeing; and it was proposed to ye dissatisfied members, whether y. y. desired, as well as Gershom Campbel, the chh. to joine with them in calling a counsel, & to take it into consideration, and to Inform ye chh. whether y. y. did or no, on ye next chh.-meeting, which was adjourned to be on ye first monday in august next, to be at ye publick meeting-house, at one o’Clock in ye afternoon.

“James Briggs said, at sd. chh.-meeting, he was afraid the chh. would still joine & hold with ye chh. of Rome.”

“Att a chh.-meeting on ye 1st of January, 1747–8, the chh. did, by a vote, suspend Gershom Campbel from communion with them at ye ordinance of the lord’s supper, for saying it did appear to him that Mr. avery and the chh. have suckt at ye breast of the chh. of Rome, else they could not have swallowed down & digested such Doctrine as Mr. Avery was accused with, which is the foundation ye chh. of Rome was built upon, and ye prop yt keeps it up; and also for his unjust seperation from this chh.

“At the same chh.-meeting abovesd., the chh. did, by a vote, suspend James Briggs from communion with them at ye

Lord's Supper, for his unjust seperation from communion with ym, & his setting up a seperate meeting at ye house in which he dwells, in opposition to ye meeting and worship of God in this chh. and precinct. also, att ye same chh.-meeting abovesd., ye chh. did, by a vote, suspend Phinehas Briggs, and also Ester Briggs, ye wife of Phinehas Briggs; also Joshua Campbel, and abigal his wife; also Mary ffiney, ye wife of John ffiney, senior; also John ffiney, ye 2nd; also Lydia Campbel, ye wife of william Campbel, — for their unjust seperation from communion with ys chh., and their Joyning with yose yt have set up and held a seperate meeting, in opposition to ye meeting and worship of God in this chh. and precinct.

“Att the chh.-meeting abovesd., The chh. were desired, by ye Pastor, to inform the other members of the chh. who did seperate from communion with the chh. in ye Publick worship of God in his house and sanctuary upon the sabbath, and from communion with ye chh. at ye ordinance of the Lord's Supper, that the chh. did think it to be their duty to bear a testimony against their unjust seperation, without y. y. should make satisfaction to ye chh. for their offence in withdrawing from communion with ym in ye publick worship, and at ye ordinance of ye Lord's Supper.

“Whereas there were several of the chh. did think it their duty to bear testimony against those members of ye chh. yt did seperate from communion with ye chh. in ye Publick worship of God in his house & sanctuary, and at ye ordinance of ye Lord's Supper, without y. y. should make satisfaction to ye chh. for their offence, ye Pastor did desire ye chh. to meet Immediately after the publick lecture preceeding the sacrament to be on ye first Sabbath in March (sd. lecture was to be on ye 2nd day of march, 1747–8), that ye chh. might bear a testimony against yr. unjust seperation, without y. y. should make satisfaction to ye chh. for their offence in seperating from communion with ym.

“Att a chh.-meeting, after ye Publick lecture was ended, on ye 2nd day of march, 1747–8, the chh., by a vote, suspended Eliezer ffisher, ye 2nd; also william Campbel; also Solomon ffiney; also Mary, ye Daughter of John ffiney, sen., — from communion with ym at ye ordinance of ye Lord's Supper, for their unjust seperation and joyning with yose yt set up and hold a seperate meeting on ye Lord's day, in opposition to ye meeting and worship of God in this chh. and precinct.”

It seems, from what we have just transcribed, that John Finney, sen., James Briggs, and Gershom Campbell, are clearly entitled to the honor of being the original "Know-Nothings" of Norton. Their party seems at first to have been a small minority; but probably increased, in a year or two, to a majority of the church. At any rate, the suspension of members at these several church-meetings did not entirely heal the unhappy difficulties that distracted the church.

The desire for the ordination of deacons and the choosing of elders became again, in a short time, the bone of contention, and kept alive the spirit of discord. Here is the evidence:—

"Att the Request or desire of several of the Brethren of the chh. att the chh.-meeting, upon the ninth of sept., 1748, the Pastor appointed a church-meeting on the 7th of October next, to see whether the chh. would vote to have the Deacons ordained, and would make choice of Lay Elders."

"Att the chh.-meeting on ye 7th of October, 1748, the chh. voted to have ye deacons ordained, and also voted to chuse Elders. att ye chh.-meeting abovesd., it was desired there should be a fast, before the choice of Elders, by John Briggs, the 2nd; and it was Proposed to have a fast preceeding ye next sacrament, and agreed upon to have but one exercise in Publick, and that sd. Publick exercise should begin at Eleven o'clock in the forenoon; and the church-meeting to chuse Elders to be Immediately after Publick exercise should be ended.

"JOSEPH AVERY."

The fast came and went; but it was not instrumental in bringing the olive-branch of peace to the contending parties, or of pouring the oil of brotherly love upon the troubled sea of church difficulties. A true *spiritual fast* would alone accomplish such a result. To such an extent had these men given way to their feelings and prejudices, that we fear they held "the fast for strife and debate," rather than "to loose the bonds of wickedness." We are the more inclined to this belief from the fact,—which will be more fully established in the next chapter,—that no elders were chosen after the fast-services were concluded.

Mr. Avery evidently did not intend they should be chosen. A portion of the church are, however, determined to carry their point, or "crush out" their minister in the attempt. This last might have been: at any rate, it did subsequently become the paramount purpose they had in view. It is evident, from what we have recorded, that the true spirit of Christian love and forbearance was fast losing its power over both parties, in their zeal to circumvent one another.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DISMISSION, DEATH, &c., OF REV. MR. AVERY.

"A man
More sinned against than sinning." — SHAKESPEARE.

It is evident, from what we have recorded in the last chapter, that events are fast hastening to a crisis. The sore is about to break. No one can predict what will be the actual result. There is a hesitancy about proceeding to extreme measures; yet all feel that they cannot long be delayed. Hope and fear filled the breast of the one party and the other. The annual meeting for voting the minister's salary and other parish charges is at hand. It is no doubt expected that the impending storm will burst forth at that time. But the gathering clouds are not yet sufficiently condensed for that purpose. The meeting was held Nov. 3, 1748; and the parish vote "to Mr. Joseph Avery, for his salary this present year, in old tenor, £140—0—0."

In two days from this time, "In answer to a Petition of John Wetherell, 1st, the Hon'ble George Leonard, Esqr., John Briggs, ye 2nd, Deacon Benjamin Hodges, and others, inhabitants of the South Precinct in ye town of Norton," a warrant for a parish meeting is posted up, the first article of which was "To vote that the Reverend Mr. Joseph Avery be dismissed from being the minister of sd. Precent, for reasons given in sd. Petition." The meeting was held

Nov. 21, 1748; and Simeon Wetherell is chosen moderator.

"2ly, There was a vote caled for, to Know whether there should be a vote caled for to dismis the Revd. mr. Joseph Avery from his being the sd. Precint's minister; and it pased in the affirmitive.

"3dly, They voted, that whereas the Reverand mr. Joseph avery, the minister of this Precent, hath not Ruled and Governed the Church of Christ, in this South Precint of the town of Norton, acording to the Platforme of church Discepline (which said church had voted to be their Rule of disepline), nor acording to the Plaine votes of that church, which he himselfe had caled for, but still Refuses to Govern acording to it; and said Precint also Looking upon sd. mr. avery as a person not able nor Capebell to sustaine the office of a minester, he not being qualefyed for it (as we think); therefore it is voted, that he be dismist from being the minister in this Precint for the futer. and the sd. Precint desire the church in this Part of said towne to meet as soone as may be, and dismis him from his said trust, so that sd. Precint may be clear from any further Charge in maintaining of him any Longer; and also that the Church and Precint in this part of the towne may do their duty, and be in their way to obtaine a sutabell Person to settel with us in the ministry.

"4ly, They voted that the vote which was Past in the Last Precint meeting to vote mr. avery a Salery for this Present year Shall be null and void, and that the assesers shall not make any Rate for it; and John Gilbert entered his Protest against ye above votes."

The war against the pastor is now openly declared. Nov. 25, the opposing brethren make and sign their allegations, and act as follows. We copy from the original document:—

"Objections against the Revd. mr. Joseph Avery are as followeth:—

"1st, That he has Taken Persons to owne the Covenant, in order to have their Children Baptised, or to be Baptised themselves, without any vote of the Church; and that he has made a Practice of doing so for many years, notwithstanding it hath Been conteray to the minds of the Biggest Part of his church (if not all), and many of them hath done what they could against it.

“2ly, That he hath Refused or neglected to appoint church-meetings when he has Been desired to appoint church-meeting, not only by Persons speaking to him about it, but also when they have Petitioned for Church-meeting in writing under their hands.

“3ly, That he has Refused to Govern and Rule this Church according to the Platforme of church discipline, notwithstanding the church voted sd. Platforme to be their Rule of discipline, & notwithstanding he himselfe was consenting to it, and Caled for those Church votes himselfe.

“4ly, That he has not done His duty in visiting his People, and catechising the children in his Parish, nor yett done his duty in Preaching to them; for a Great number of them have absented from the Publick worship, so that they are but sildom there: and we don't Know that he takes any notice of it, either in his Preaching or any other ways.

“5ly, That he hath Refused or neglected to ordaine deacons in this Church, notwithstanding the Church hath been very uneasy about it, and applied to him about it, by times, for this many years; but he has still evaded it to this day.

“6ly, That he has Refused to joyne with the Church in Chusing Ruling elders, agreeabell to the sd. Church Platforme, which this Church had voted for their Rule of discipline, & when this Church had voted to chuse Ruling elders, and he himselfe was Consenting thareto, and Caled for the vote of sd. Church himselfe: and at that meeting he said he did not Like the Chusing of Ruling elders, but, Sence the Church was so much for haveing Ruling elders, he would joyne with them in Chusing of them; for it was not against his chonchance (or in words to that effect); and then appointed a day for a fast, and to Chuse the elders and deacons to be ordained, according to the vote of sd. Church. and, when the day Came, the Church and some others of the People meet, when he did not in either of his Prayers, or in his Sermon he Preached, mention one word about elders and deacons, and then Refused to Joyne with ye Church in Chusing elders, but declared that there was no Rule in the scripturs for Chusing lay elders (as he caled them), but said they ware officers of men's appointing, and he Could not in conchance Joyne with the Church in Chusing Ruling elders; for it had been always against his conchance (or in words to that Import). so that we look upon this a false saying; and so he has always evaded the Chusing Ruling elders, or governing this church

acording to the sd. church Platforme and the votes of this church, which he was Consenting to, and caled for himselfe.

“7ly, That we of this church Look upon the said Mr. Avery as a Person not sutabell nor any ways Qualefyed for a Gospell minister, But Looking upon his settling and Remaining the minister of this Place to be a Great Hurt to Religion, and has almost Brought it into contempt, and such a coldness that it Seems almost Lost and decayed amongst us.

“The above and before objections are what we, the members of the first Church of Christ in norton, hath against the Revend mr. Joseph avery, his Ruling and Governing this church; for which Reasons, and what further may be offered, we desire the Brethren, Dea. Benjamin Hodges, George Leonard, John Briggs, 2nd, Benja. Cobb, to appley to the said Rev. Mr. Joseph Avery, and to See if he will ask a dismission, that he may be dismist from his Pastorall offis over us; and, in Cace he will not ask a dismission, that they send for a counsell, consisting of three or five churches, to advise this church in dismissing of ye sd. Rev. Mr. Joseph Avery from his Pastorell office over this church. dated in Norton, November 25, 1748.

“John Austin, Ebenezer Eddy, Ephraim Lane, Seth Smith, Jonathan Knap, Philep Cooye, Benja. Newcomb, Jeremiah Cambell, Jonathan Hodges, Silvanus Braman, Jonathan Clap, Ephraim Wetherell, Benja. Copeland,¹ John Briggs, 3d, John Wetherel, Daniel Braman, Joshua Pomery, Eliezer Fisher, 2d, John Briggs, George Briggs.”

On the back of this paper is written, —

“A trew copey of the objections on ye other side, with this that is here underwritten, was delivered to ye Revd. Mr. Joseph avery.

“The before-written objections are what we, the members of the first church of christ in Norton, hath against the Revd. Mr. Joseph Avery, his Ruling and Govening of this church; as witness our hands.

“Dated December 1st, 1748.

“GEORGE LEONARD,	} In behalf of themselves and the ma- jor Part of ye chh.”
JOHN BRIGGS, 2nd,	
BENJA. COBB,	
BENJA. HODGES,	

¹ “To ye 1st, 6th, and 7th articles.”

Mr. Avery replies to these objections against him in a note, which we here introduce: —

“To Coll. George Leonard, Esq., John Briggs, 2nd, Benjamin Cobb, Benjm. Hodges, for themselves and sundry others.

“Gentelman and Dear Brethren, — I recev'd at your hand a paper dated Decemb. ye 1st, 1748, containing sundry objections, as your are pleased to stile ym, Against myself; which articles I have taken into ye most Carefull and Serious Consideration, and they appear to me both unreasonable and unjust, and by no means sufficient to induce me to think I am Call'd of God to surcease my Ministerial labors among you. Dear Brethren, I have heard that some say I am dismissed already, and some that I am not qualified to sustan the ministerial office. I am ready to Join with you in Calling an Ecclesiastical Council (equal number of Regular constituted chhs. chosen by me and you) to Judge and council in the important affair. If you are desireous of a Council, I pray you to let me Know it this day week, and that day week (God willing) I will meet you at ye meeting-house to determine what chhs. to send to, and prepare letters-missive. If you desire a council, I expect to have it in writing under your hands, and what you desire it for.

“Your friend and pastor,

Joseph Avery

“NORTON, December 12th, 1748.”

The committee return the following answer: —

“To the Revd. Mr. Joseph Avery, Pastor of the first Church of Christ in Norton.

“Revd. Sr., — we Recev'd your letter Dated 12th of this Instant december, wherein you informe us that you have Considered our Paper which we delivered to you (which we Call'd our Objections against you). You also inform us that you have Consider'd sd. objections, and that they appear to you both unreasonable and unjust, &c.; and you further informe us, that, if we desire a Councill, you will meet at the meeting-house the monday after next, and Joyn with us in Calling an Ecclesiastical Council (of Equall numbers of Regularly Constituted Churches Chosen by you and us) to Judge and Council in the important affair, &c. to this we answer,

that we are by no means Ready to Joyn in sending for a Council yet; for all our objections which we have against you ought to be aledged against you in a regular Church-meeting, and there tryed to be made up, before we send for a Council to hear them. Therefore, Revend Sr., we pray you to appoint a church-meeting; to be at ye meeting-house, on monday, the second day of January next, that the church may have timely notice of it; that they generally meet together, and hear and determine on the Objections which we have already given in against you, and what we shall say to them; and do what they shall think most for the glory of God, and interest of Religion. these are what you are desired to do before we can by any ways joyn in sending for an Ecclesiastical council; and, Revernd Sr., you will very much oblige your Grieved Brethren.

<p>“The reason of our desire to have it put of so long is, that two of us are obliged to go to the General Court at Boston, and do not Expect to be at home much sooner.</p>	<p>GEORGE LEONARD, JOHN BRIGGS, 2d, BENJAMIN HODGES, BENJM. COBB,</p>	<p>} In behalf of themselves and several others of ye sd. chh.</p>
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“Dated at NORTON, December 19th, 1748.”

According to the desire of the committee, a church-meeting is called.

I have found, on a detached sheet of paper, a record of what was done at the meeting. It is, no doubt, in the handwriting of the moderator. Let us examine this record, and ascertain what action the church take in reference to their pastor:—

“A church-meeting, duly notified by the Rev. Pastor of the first chh. of christ in Norton to be on ye 2d of Jany., 1748, at the Publick meeting-house. The sd. chh. being assembled according to Notification, Rev. Mr. Avery, their Pastor, opened sd. Meeting with Prayer; withdrew, and told the chh. they might choose one of themselves Modr. for sd. Meeting. But the sd. Chh. made choice of Solomon Prentice, Pastor of the chh. in Easton, for yr Modr.

“It was then voted, that a Comtee be chosen to wait on Rev. Mr. Avery, enforming of him who the chh. had made

choice of for their Modr.; and to desire Rev. Mr. Avery to come into sd. Meeting (if he pleas'd), and make answer to ye objections the chh. have Exhibited against him.

“Br. Ebenr. Edy, Danll. Braman, Samll. Dean, and John Wild, [were] chosen sd. Comtee, who caryed the preceeding vote to the Rev. Mr. Avery, who came into the meeting, Read his answer, Left itt with the chh., and then withdrew.”

Mr. Avery's answer reads thus : —

“Brethren, — as to ye Objections Laid before you against myself, I now make answer. the first objection is, yt I take persons to own ye Covenant in order to have yr children baptised, or to be Baptised themselves, without any vote of ye chh. to this I answer, yt I have, in the fear of God, in this affair, Conducted, I think, according to Scriptur and ye General Practice of ye churches of christ in ye land. the 2nd objection is, that I have refused or neglected to appoint chh.-meetings, when I have ben desired by persons by word of mouth and also under handwriting. I answer, yt I have not refused or neglected to Call and appoint chh.-meetings, when I could think yt the Glory of God and ye interest of Religion Call'd for it; and, when ye case was doubtfull and of Consequence, I always took council and advise. The 4th objon is, that I have not done my duty in visiting ye People of my Charge, and Catechiseing the Children. as to Catachising ye Children, I think I have faithfully Endeavor'd to do my duty. as to visiting the people, I don't Know that any under my charge have Sent to me in time of Distres, by night or by day, but I have visited them, when my Circumstances would Possibly allow of it. as to the 3rd, 5th, and 6th, I refer you for an answer to the paper I gave in to the precintt-meeting, wherein I Answer you, that I am fully disposed to practise according to platform in chh. discipline, and propose to Keep close to it.

“As to the 7th objection, that my settling in the ministry at Norton was a frown of providence, and a great hurt to religion, I answer, that since so Great, wise, and Good a man as major Leonard, ye father of Coll. George Leonard, with the advise of the venerable Mr. Danforth, was the Chief hands in enviting and settling of me, If coronel Leonard and others don't think this objection both unreasonable and unjust, I must and Can't but think there is in it a great want of Reverence and Good manners, speaking in the softest terms.

"Brethren, if my answer to your objections is not satisfactory, I am ready to Join with you in Calling an Ecclesiastical Council of Regularly Constituted chhs. (Equal numbers Chosen by me and you) to Judge in this affair.

"Dated NORTON, January 2nd, 1748-9.

"JOSEPH AVERY."

After the pastor had withdrawn, it was "Proposed a Comtee be chosen to wait on ye Revd. Mr. Avery, Informing him ye chh. Desires their Rev. Pastor to ask a Dismission from his pastoral office in this place; upon his doing of which, ye chh. are willing to withdraw all their objections against him, and, with the Consent of the precinct, to make him a handsome consideration. An answer is expected now.

"Voted affermat.

"And Dr. Ware, bro. Samll. Dean, chosen sd. Comtee; who carey'd the sd. vote to ye Rev. Pastor. Then ye meeting was adjourn'd, by vote of ye chh., to ye house of Capt. Jonathan Lawrence in sd. Town, there to meet forthwith.

"Accordingly, the chh. mett at sd. place, and waited the Return of their Comtee; who, Returning, brought a few lines from Rev. Mr. Avery, which satisfied not ye chh."

The prospect of the "handsome consideration" promised seems not to have had much influence upon the mind of their minister; for the few lines he sent back to the church are in these words:—

"In answer to a Request sent to myself by ye hands of Docter willm. Ware and Samuel Dean, a Committee Chosen by the Brethren of the chh., — Dear Brethren, I inform you now, as I informed Coll. George Leonard, Esq., John Briggs, 2nd, and Benjamin Hodges and Benjamin Cobb, upon my receiving ye objections Exhibited against myself, which articles I informed you, after I had taken into ye most careful and serious consideration; and they did appear to me to be both unreasonable and unjust, and no way sufficient to induce me to surcease my ministeriel Labours among you.

"From your friend and Pastor,

"JOSEPH AVERY.

"Dated NORTON, January 2nd, 1748-9."

This communication, as we have seen, “satisfied not ye chh.”

“Wherefore they proceeded to ye Consra. of ye Several Art. of Objection against ye Rev. Pastor; and considr’d and debated upon ye articles one by one, and passed ye following votes thereon; viz.:—

“1. Propos’d, wr. the chh. are Satisfied with ye Rev. Mr. Avery’s ans’r yrto wc. pased in? . . . Negt. Then it was proposed, whethr ye chh. are still dissatisfied and uneasy with yr Rev. past. on account of yr first Article? . . . Votd. affirmat.

“2 Art. proposed, wr. ye chh. are satisfied with ye Rev. Mr. Avery’s answer thereunto? pass’d. . . . Negat. then Proposed, wr. ye chh. are still dissatisfied and aggrieved with yr Rev. Pastr’s Conduct, as Expres’d in yr 2d objection? . . . Votd. affirmat.

“Then it was moved that ye form of ye vote might be altered yrfore as to . . .

“3 Art. Proposed, wr. ye chh. are still dissatisfied with Rev. Mr. Avery on acct. of yr 3d objection? Votd. affirmat.

“Then propos’d, wr. ye chh. are satisfied with Rev. Mr. Avery’s answer to ye 3d objection? pass’d Negative.

“4 Art. Propos’d, wr. ye chh. are still uneasy and Dissatisfied with ye Rev. Pastr with Relation to yr 4th Objection? . . . Votd. affirmat.

“Then propos’d, wr. ye chh. are satisfied with Rev. Mr. Avery’s answer to ye 4th objection? pass’d Negative.

“5 Art. Propos’d, wr. ye chh. are still Dissatisfied with their Revd. pastor on account of ye 5th objection? . . . Votd. affirmat.

“Then propos’d, whethr ye chh. are satisfied with yr Revd. pastor’s answer to ye 5th objection? Votd. Negative.

“6 Art. propos’d, whethr ye chh. are still very much aggrieved with their Revd. pastor on account of their 6th objection? . . . Votd. affirmat.

“Then propos’d, wr. ye chh. are satisfied with ye Revd. pastor answer to their objection? . . . pass’d Negative.

“7 Art. proposed, whether ye chh. are still very unEasy with ye Rev. Mr. Avery with Relation to their 7th objection? . . . Votd. affirmat.

"Then propos'd, wher. ye chh. are satisfied with Revd. Mr. Avery's Reply to their 7th objection? pas'd Negat.

"Then propos'd, that inasmuch as this chh. have Manifested yr Dissatisfaction with yr Rev. pasr. for sundry reasons alledged and consider'd of by this chh., whether it does not appear to this chh. Necessary now to proceed to call in ye help of an Ecclesiastical council to advise and council them undr. yr present Difficulties? . . . Votd. affirmat.

"Proposed to send to 5 chhs. to Constitute this our proposed council.

"1. Ye chh. of Ct. in Easton proposed. . . . Votd. affirmat.

"2. The chh. of Ct. in Raynham proposed. . . . Votd. affirmat.

"3. Ye chh. of Ct. in Rochester (Rev. Mr. Ruggles) propos'd. . . . Votd. affirmat.

"4. Ye 2d chh. of Ct. in Wrentham proposed. . . . Votd. affirmat.

"5. The 2d chh. in Attleboro' proposed. . . . Votd. affirmat.

"Then proposed, Col. George Leonard, Dea. Hodges, and Lieut. Benja. Cobb, be appointed to sign ye Letters-Miss. in the chh.'s name. . . . Votd. affirmat.

"Then proposed, Tuesday, Jany. 24 currant, be ye time for the meeting of ye council; & ye place of yr meeting be Col. George Leonard's, in sd. Norton, at 10 o'clock, A.M. . . . Votd. affirmat.

"Then propos'd Dea. Benjn. Hodges be occasional Modr. in ye chh. untill further order. . . . Vot. affirmative.

"Then proposed, this meeting be adjourned to Wensday, 25 currant, 1'clock, P.M., then to meet at the house of Col. George Leonard in sd. Norton. . . . Vot. affirmat.

"Accordingly, sd. Meeting was declared to be adjourned to ye Last-mentioned time & place.

"SOLOMON PRENTICE, Modr."

The committee appointed for that purpose, no doubt, immediately prepared a letter-missive (a blank form of which I have found), and sent it to the several churches above named. We record the letter as we find it:—

"The 1st chh. of Ct. in Norton to the chh. of Christ in ———
Sends greeting.

"Rev., Hond., and Belov'd, —

"Inasmuch as it has pleased God in his Sovereign pleasure to permitt a great Number of this chh. to be uneasy with the Rev. Mr. Avery, our Pastor, for sundry things that we have taken Exception att in his Doctrine, Discipline, & conduct, which we are justly disquieted at (as we apprehend), yt we cannot judge it any Longer for ye honr of God & Interest of Religion that the Rev. Mr. Avery should sustain ye Ministerial office in this place; neither can we be easy he should, unless, our grievances being abated, we are advised yrunto by an Ecclesiastical Council. We therefore earnestly Entreat yr assistance in Council, with several other chhs., by yr Rev. elder & such Messengers you may think proper, to meet at the house of Col. George Leonard, in Norton, on Tuesday, Jany. 24 current, at 10 'clock, forenoon. In the Mean time, we Intreat a Costant Remembrance with you in yr prayers for us, that all things may Issue for ye glory of God.

"While we rest yr brothrs
in the faith and order of ye
gospel.

"NORTON.

"Chhs. sent to are Rev.
Mr. Ruggles, of Rochester;
Easton, Raynham, 2 in Wren-
tham, 2 in Attleboro'.

"In ye name and by ap-
pointment of sd. 1st chh. in
Norton."

Mr. Avery now felt called upon to do something to sustain himself against the disaffected party. His proposition, once and again made to his opposers, for a mutual council, was perfectly proper and just; and every principle of honor and fair dealing seems to demand that it should have been complied with: yet the malecontents saw fit to reject it, and call an *ex-parte* council; thus leaving the impression, that they were not actuated by the purest motives in their warfare against their venerable pastor. Had they been as zealous "for ye honr of God & Interest of Religion" as they seem to intimate, we cannot but think they would have been ready to grant the very reasonable desire of their spiritual adviser.

Being denied the boon craved, Mr. Avery took the only course he consistently could; and forthwith summoned a council of ministers and messengers at his house, on the same day fixed for the meeting of the church's council. His letter-missive we have fortunately found, and insert it here. Read it attentively: —

“To the chh. of Christ, &c.

“Joseph Avery, Pastor of the first chh. of Christ in Norton, sendeth Greeting.

“Rev'd., Hond., and Belov'd, —

“It hath pleased ye holy and sovereign Lord to suffer a considerable number of ys chh. to take up (as I apprehend) an unreasonable prejudice against myself, yr pastor. the circumstances of this chh. are at present very unhappy, distressing, and threatening, such as calleth for the compassion of sister chhs.; we. I hope God in his great mercy will grant us, and bless for ye promoting of peace and truth among us.

“Some time since, a number of ys chh. presented me with a paper containing sundry objections against me, as they were pleased to stile them; and then subjoined a verbal request yt I would ask a Dismission. A few days after, I sent ym ys answer, — yt, having taken yr objections and propositions into ye most serious and carefull consideration, they appeared to me to be both unreasonable & unjust, by no means sufficient to induce me to think I was called of God to surcease my ministerial labors among them; and, if y. y. thought otherwise, I was ready to joine with ym in calling a council. Some time after ys, they brought me another paper, signifying y. y. were not yet ripe for council, desiring me to appoint a chh.-meeting to hear yr objections, and wt y. y. had to say upon ym. accordingly, I did appoint a chh.-meeting; at wc. meeting I gave my answer in writing, and subjoined, that, if my answer was not satisfactory, I was ready to join with ym in calling an Ecclesiastical council (equal numbers chosen by ym and myself) to hear, determine, and advise in ye great and important affair. They refused to accept my answer as satisfactory; they also refused to join with me in calling a council, and have ymselves sent for a separte council of 5 chhs. to meet at ye house of Coll. George Leonard, in Norton, on tuesday, ye 24th of ys Instant January, at 10 ante M. I humbly & Earnestly begg your compassion, and yt you would send with your Elder one Messenger, to set in council with

several other chhs. att my house in Norton, on tuesday, ye 24th of ys Instant January, at 10 in ye morning, to hear our melancholy case, to give such advise as ye great & good God shall direct. wishing grace, mercy, & peace to you from God yr Father & our Lord Jesus Christ, begging an Interest in your prayers always,

“I subscribe your unworthy bro. in ye faith & fellowship of the Gospel,

“JOSEPH AVERY,

“Pastor of ye first chh. in Norton.

“NORTON, January 4th, 1748-9.”

Appended to this letter is this note : —

“To Coronel George Leonard, Deacon Benjamin Hodges, Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, Gentleman.

“This is a copy of the letters I have sent to ye 2nd chh. in Scituate, ye Revd. Mr. Ellis, Pastor; to ye two chhs. in Rehoboth; ye 3d chh. in Bridgewater; ye chh. in Midway; ye chh. in Warren.

“JOSEPH AVERY.”

The council of the church met at the time and place specified. They probably wished for a little explanation in reference to one or two of the objections; and what is written below was furnished : —

“Whereas in the 7th article of our objections against the Reverend Mr. Joseph Avery, as a person not suitable or any ways qualifed for a Gospel minister, &c., — first, he hath not understanding enough, as we think, to Regulate church-meetings, but they are generally, when had, managed in great confusion and disorder; so that we think it not for the Glory of God to have such a minister that Regulates those meetings in such a way and manner, and, when he pleaseth, to adjourn sd. meetings without the vote or consent of the church, notwithstanding they stand up and oppose it. . . .

“Secondly, that we don't look on him as a man sound in his principles; for, when he was Preaching concerning the Binding and Loosing of sins (or sinner), in his prayer after sermon he used these Expressions, — that none might set light by ministers, since or seeing that they had power to Loose and bind souls, even to the forgiveness of sins.

“Thirdly, at another time, in his preaching that sanctification was Rought by the agency of the holy Gost, when he

came to the application, he sd., What cause have we, then, to pray to the holy Gost to send us his holy spirit?

“Fourthly, that he hath not acted agreeable to scripture Rule, as we think, in taking members in the church; that he hath very much neglected to Examine them (which makes us think that he does not Know what to say to them at such times; or, at Least, that he neglects his duty therein). Together with what further may be offered, we think we shall make out that objection very fully.

“GEORGE LEONARD,

“In Behalf of ye Rest.”

While this council was in session at Mr. Leonard's, the other, called by the pastor and his friends (for he had some friends yet left), was convened at his house; and he (Mr. Avery) sent this note to Mr. Leonard: —

“To the Honble. George Leonard, Esq., one of ye comittee of this chh., as it is called.

“These are to signify yt ye venerable council called by myself and adhering brethren purpose to proceed to a publick hearing of our unhappy case to-morrow, at 10 in ye morning; and to request you to attend the said council at my house, unless the council shall meet at your store (?), and then at your own house; and yt you notify ye other gentleman of sd. committee that y. y. attend with you.

“JOSEPH AVERY, Pastor.

“JANUARY 25th, 1748-9.”

In reply, Mr. Leonard sends this note: —

“Rev'd. sir, — yours of last night I just now received; & in answer, say, that as to the case in which our committee are concerned, they not being present, I cannot answer for them: but, in my private capacity, with relation to the venerable council by you invited, their meeting at my house, I say to yourself, and inviting you to do it also to them, that they shall be welcome to my house to hear the case as we shall open it to the council called by us; it being the needfull at this time. I rest, Rev'd. sir, your

“Humble servant,

“G. L.

“NORTON, 26 Jan., 1748.”

Whether the two councils met together, and a full hearing of the whole matter was entered into or not, is among the secrets not yet revealed.

Probably, however, they did not thus meet; as it appears from Mr. Prentice's record, which we give below, that the result of the council was made known to, and accepted by, the church the next day after the date of Mr. Leonard's note. Most likely, Mr. Avery saw that the current was setting against him, and concluded to let it take its course. How matters eventuated we shall soon see.

"The 1st chh. of Ct. in Norton, in a Regular chh.-meeting by adjournment at ye house of ye Honble. George Leonard, Esq., unanimously Votd. to accept of ye Result of ye Venble. council by ym'called, & this Day published; And Dea. Benja. Hodges & Lieut. Benja. Cobb wr Votd. by sd. chh. to wait on ye Rev. Mr. Avery, yr Pastr, with ye council's Result, to know of him, in writing, whether he will ask a Dismission from his Pastoral office in this place. sd. chh. also Votd. to adjourn the chh.-meeting two hours; then to meet at this place in order to proceed further.

"Attst:

"S. PRENTICE, Modr.

"NORTON, Jany. 27, 1748."

Deacon Hodges and Lieut. Cobb immediately post off down to Mr. Avery's with the result of the *ex-parte* council. We know nothing of its character, except what we gather from Mr. Prentice's record and subsequent events. The substance of it, no doubt, was, that Mr. Avery is advised to ask a dismission from his pastoral relations with the church and society, to whose spiritual welfare he had devoted the best years of his life and the noblest energies of his mind.

We are not permitted to look in and witness the presentation of the "result" to the gray-headed servant of God, and therefore we can give no account of the meeting; but imagination can easily complete the picture.

Sad and desponding, though not altogether taken by surprise at the turn of events, the pastor, in a note addressed to the church, asks for a little delay before he gives his final answer. Let us read it: —

"To the first chh. of Christ in Norton, convened at ye house of Coll. George Leonard, Esq. these are to signify, I

have received by your Messengers ye Result of your council, and shall take ye great and Important affair into ye most serious consideration; and ye chh. may Expect my answer ye next week, att ye time and place y. y. shall appoint.

“Your Pastor in ye Lord,

“JOSEPH AVERY.

“NORTON, Jan. 27, 1748-9.

“P. S. — My Earnest request and desire is, that ye Revd. Mr. Ruggles would please to preach in my pulpit ye next sabbath.”

We now go back to the church-meeting at Mr. Leonard's, whose members are anxiously awaiting the return of their committee. They are in no mood to deny the reasonable desire of their grief-stricken pastor; for we find, —

“Upon the Receipt of the Rev. Mr. Avery's Answer to ye Desire of the first chh. of christ in Norton this day signified to him, the chh. Vod. to adjourn this Meeting to Monday Next, 9 'clock forenoon; then to Meet at ye meeting-house in this place to Receive their Pastor's answer to their Request of this day, and to act thereon.

“Attst:

“S. PRENTICE, Modr.

“NORTON, Jany. 27, 1748.”

It was now Friday. In tears, and with constant prayer to God for guidance and direction in this important matter, he spends the short period allotted him for deliberation; and on the Monday following, Jan. 30, 1748-9, O.S., or Feb. 10, 1749, N.S., it is morally certain that Rev. Joseph Avery acceded to the decision of the council; sent in his resignation; and, from that day, ceased to be the pastor of the church with which he had labored from his ordination, — thirty-four years, three months, and two days.

From the report of a committee appointed by the precinct in relation to his salary, the fact is clearly established, that his ministerial labors ended Jan. 30, 1748-9, O.S. In concluding their report, the committee say, —

“Therefore [we] are of the opinion that it will be Best for this precint to pay Mr. Joseph Avery's salary from the first

of March, 1747–8, untill the 30th of January, 1748–9; being about eleven months to the time when he was dismissed from his ministerial office amongst us.

“Dated in NORTON, March 1st, 1748–9.

“GEORGE LEONARD.
WILLIAM WARE.”

The reader will have observed that the objections brought against Mr. Avery are of the most trivial nature, and not in the least affecting his moral character; nor do they give a sufficient warrant for the rending asunder so abruptly the ties of pastor and people. We think his opposers must have been slow of understanding, if it took them almost forty years to find out that their minister was not qualified for the pastoral office. We believe, if any one will read the pages of this chapter attentively, and with an unbiased mind, he will be convinced that the paramount objection to Mr. Avery was not brought to the surface. The real objections to the pastor were, without doubt, 1st, his anti-Calvinistic notions; and, 2d, his strong and manly opposition to the great revival of 1740, in which the celebrated Whitefield was the leader. Rev. Eleazer Wheelock, of Lebanon, Conn., among others, preached here Oct. 3, 1741. In his journal, he says he was “kindly received by Mr. Avery. Preached to a full assembly: much affection and sobbing through the assembly.” Although, at first, Mr. Avery might have been favorably disposed towards the movement of Whitefield, he and others soon became convinced it would result in no permanent good to the country; and therefore they signed an earnest protest against it, which concludes in these words:¹ —

¹ We copy this closing portion of the protest from the Great Awakening, p. 363, but have been unable to find the document entire. Rev. Joseph Tracy, the author of the book referred to, cannot say where he found the document, but thinks it was either in the Athenæum, or the Old South Church Library, at Boston. I cannot find it in either place; but a volume of tracts relating to Whitefield, belonging to the Old South Church Library, was missing from the library when I examined it in the autumn of 1858. The author of the Great Awakening says the protest is remarkable for nothing but the extract he gave. We would have given our readers the benefit of the whole document, if we could have found it.

“When Mr. Whitefield first came among us, he used his utmost craft and cunning to strike the passions and engage the affections of the people; and when he had wrought them into a fond opinion of his excellences, and they began to look upon him as one endowed with an uncommon measure of the Spirit, he continued to insinuate that unconverted ministers could do little or no good to souls; that dead men might as well beget living children. Having thus prepared the way, he leaves the country with this most vile insinuation, — ‘That many, nay most, that preach, I fear, do not experimentally know Christ; and the universities are become dark, — darkness in the abstract.’ Well, what is the language of all this? He that runs may read. Dead men may as well beget living children, as an unconverted minister do good to souls. The most of your ministers are unconverted: you must, then, if you have any regard to your souls, separate from them, and seek better help. But what will you do? You can’t have any help from the colleges: *there* is nothing but darkness, — darkness that may be felt. You must, then, content yourselves with some illiterate exhorters, until you can have a supply from the Shepherd’s Tent, the Orphan House, or elsewhere. It appear-eth to us, that the Devil, with all his cunning, could not take a more direct step to overthrow these churches, hurt religion and the souls of men.

“Joseph Avery, of Norton; John Greenwood and David Turner, of Rehoboth; Ebenezer White, of Norton; Solomon Townsend, of Barrington; and John Burt, of Bristol.”

We are decidedly of the opinion, that, if Mr. Avery had supported the Whitefield movement, he would never have been dismissed. Rev. Mr. Clarke, in his “Historical Sermon,” speaking of Mr. Avery, says, —

“He was not a popular preacher, but a good character; pacific in his temper, and an agreeable companion. In the course of his ministry, he was met with a violent opposition from many who were called *new lights*. They, in their enthusiastic zeal, condemned him as incapable of preaching the gospel. By their influence, they increased the opposition to such a degree that the society voted him a dismission.”

The followers of Whitefield were very zealous religionists, and were called “new lights.” There were many of Mr. Avery’s church who became “new

lights;" and not being able to carry their minister with them, or to turn him in the least from his convictions of duty, they seceded from his church, and established a dissenting church and society, of which we shall give an account hereafter. The fact that an opposition church had been organized and a minister settled, and the fear that the old church would be broken up or very much weakened, no doubt brought the opposition to decisive action, and perhaps had much influence in determining the "result" of the council. The opposition were also, no doubt, encouraged to the course they took by Rev. Mr. Prentice, of Easton, — a zealous "new light," who was finally *disfellowshipped* by the neighboring ministers, and dismissed from his pastoral office. The reader will take notice that he was very officious, as moderator of the church, while they were seeking to dismiss their minister; and probably did more than any other person to "crush out" Mr. Avery.

In all my investigations, I have not found any thing that casts a reflection upon the name or character of the first minister of our town. His only fault, if fault it can be called, was his unwillingness to submit to the dictation of others. We are perfectly satisfied that he was sacrificed because he dared to think and act in opposition to public opinion. But this only serves to enhance our estimation of the man. And certainly his determination to be true to the convictions of his conscience, let what would befall him, must have found favor at the bar of God, the great and impartial Judge of the world; and no doubt, as he entered the spirit-world, he heard the welcome plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Of Mr. Avery, subsequent to his dismissal, there is little to record, because little is known. He continued to reside in town, but, it is supposed, never preached after he was deposed from the ministry. There have been some doubts expressed about the place of his death. Hon. Cromwell Leonard says he was told by his father that Mr. Avery did not die in town,

and was not buried here ; but we are satisfied that he did die and was buried in Norton. In his " Historical Sermon," in allusion to Mr. Avery's dismission, Rev. Pitt Clarke says, " He lived nearly twenty-two years after this, and exemplified the religion he taught to a good old age. He died April 23, 1770." He was consequently eighty-three years old at his death. The date of his death is also recorded on the church-books, in the handwriting of Rev. Mr. Clarke. We think Mr. Clarke must have known the place of his death, or he could not well have given us the date of it ; and, if Mr. Avery had not died in town, we are confident Mr. Clarke would have so stated. Again : Mrs. Sarah Morey, recently deceased, who was a daughter of Rev. Joseph Palmer, the successor of Mr. Avery, most positively affirmed to me, before her death, that Mr. Avery did die in town ; that he died in the house where he had always lived in Norton ; and that she distinctly remembered seeing the funeral procession pass by her father's house, and go to the graveyard in front of the house with the corpse. She was then some six or seven years of age. We know that Mr. Avery was here within five or six years of his death ; because, on the 8th of September, 1763, the parish " voted to Mr. Joseph Avery, for the taking care of the meeting-house and Sweeping it, 0—8—0—0:" and on the 7th of March, 1764, Mr. Avery deeded his farm to Dr. Gideon Tiffany, no doubt with the understanding that Dr. Tiffany should take care of him in his old age. Tiffany remained in town till the death of Mr. Avery ; and then sold his farm, and went to Keene, N.H. But all doubts are resolved by the following reference to Mr. Avery, copied from the " Massachusetts Gazette and News-Letter" of Aug. 30, 1773. The writer, over the signature of " G. H.," after alluding to the fact that Mr. Avery's name was not starred (*) in the last Triennial Catalogue, says, —

" The said gentleman was formerly minister at Norton, and *died there* three or four years ago. He was esteemed, when living, by the clergy in that part of the country, as a very

honest, good man; and if he did not meet with candor and fair treatment in his old age from some, who of all men had the greatest reason to love and honor him, I doubt not he has met with ample compensation in the approbation of his Lord."

There is, then, no longer any question relative to the place of his death. The writer of the above article seemed to entertain the same opinion that we had formed; viz., that Mr. Avery was very unjustly treated and abused in his old age. The testimony of Rev. Pitt Clarke (whose authority was those who had personally known Mr. Avery) and that of the writer just quoted both concur in the idea, that he was an exemplary Christian and an honest man. His communications and letters show him to have been a man of respectable literary attainments for the time in which he lived; and there is abundant proof that he was a man of energy and decision of character, — willing, if need be, to stand alone in what he believed to be a righteous cause; in fine, that he was possessed of that manly independence, without which every person is a slave. He never had any children. His wife died Oct. 4, 1763, and was buried in the common graveyard. Mr. Avery, without a shadow of doubt in our mind, was buried beside her; for there are indications of a grave in close proximity to hers. But no stone marks the spot where his body, long ere this, has moulded to dust.¹ Citizens of Norton,

¹ Mrs. Sarah Morey, already alluded to, told me that the reason why no gravestone was erected at Mr. Avery's grave was because the property went principally to Mrs. Avery's heirs; and they cared more for the money than they did for the memory of the aged and broken-down minister. I have since searched the probate-records at Taunton; and find, that on the 18th of July, 1763, a few weeks previous to her death, Mrs. Avery, with her husband's consent, made her will, and gave the property which she had received from her father to Sarah Tiffany, wife of Gideon Tiffany, and to the three children of Sarah Stone, deceased, the wife of Nathaniel Stone. Mr. Avery was to have the use of the property as long as he lived. Gideon Tiffany was appointed executor of the will. The estate was appraised Nov. 10, 1763, at £77. 1s. 7d. May 4, 1770, — less than two weeks after the death of Mr. Avery, — Dr. Tiffany, the executor of Mrs. Avery's will, made a return of the inventory of the property. He also brought in a bill of charges against the estate; which, with the legacy bequeathed his wife, Sarah Tiffany, amounted to more than the estate was worth. In his account, the executor pays for an allowance of £1. 10s. for a pair of gravestones for Mrs. Avery, which he says were "spoken for, and to be brought and put up." Her gravestone says she "died in Sept. or Oct., 1763;" which indicates that

ought this so to be? Will you not cause a suitable monument to be erected over his remains, as a token of respect to the memory and virtues of the first minister of your town? Certainly we of the present day ought to do him justice, by removing, so far as we can, the disgrace and obloquy that clustered around his last days on earth. We trust that a word to those who would vindicate the character and reputation of an earnest, faithful, though much misrepresented man, will be sufficient. If the town, in its corporate capacity, shall decline to aid in perpetuating his memory by erecting a monument at his grave, we hope the church and parish of which he was the first pastor will discharge their duty in this matter.

CHAPTER X.

ATTEMPTS TO SETTLE A MINISTER.

“Many are called.” — CHRIST.

THE church is now without a minister, and means must be taken to provide one to supply the pulpit: but the church-records and papers are still in the hands of their late pastor, Rev. Mr. Avery; and it is deemed important that the church obtain possession of them. Accordingly, at a church-meeting held March 28, 1749, —

“2ly, The sd. church voted that Deacon John Briggs, the first, and Deacon Benjamin Hodges, shall be a committee to wait on Mr. Joseph Avery, and desire him, in the name of

she had been dead so long before it was erected, that the exact date of her death was forgotten. These facts, together with the fact that Mr. Avery, soon after the death of his wife, deeded his farm, worth over £400, to Dr. Tiffany, go strongly to corroborate the statement of Mrs. Morey; and I have no doubt that she was correct. For further notice of Dr. Tiffany, see chapter relative to physicians.

this church, to deliver them the Church-covenant and the Church-Records; and thay to Keep them till the further order of this Church."

Mr. Avery, still smarting under the wounds he had received by, as he thought, and as we think, his unjust dismissal from the pastoral office, probably declined to deliver up the covenant and records thus demanded. Hence, after some months' waiting, on the second day of October, 1749, at a church-meeting, —

"2ly, The Church voted that Dea. Benjamin Hodges and Benja. Cobb be a committee to go to Mr. Joseph Avery, and demand the Church-Covenant that this Church entered into when thay were first settled; as also all the Church-records: and, in case he delivers them up to sd. Committee, thay to give a proper receipt for them. And, in case sd. Mr. Avery refuse or delay to deliver sd. Covenant and records, that the sd. Committee are impowred, in the name and behalf of the Church, to Commence an action, or as many actions as they shall think needful, for the recovering sd. Covenant and records out of his hands; and to Prosecute sd. action or actions in the law, from Court to Court, untill they have got them; and to appeal, in the name and stead of this Church, in any Court or Courts; to carry on sd. action, and to appeall from any Judgment that shall be made up against this church in that affayre."

How the matter was adjusted we have no information. All we know is, that, at an earlier or later day, the church came into the possession of the documents alluded to. The supply of the pulpit now became a matter of importance to both church and parish. Hence the church — which was always expected, I believe, to take the lead in these matters — met April 17, 1749; and, "3ly, They voted that Coll. George Leonard, Samuel Deane, Benjamin Copeland, shall be a committee, to join with a committee that shall be chose by the precinct, to provide ministers to supply the pulpit."

On the same day, the parish add Capt. William Stone, John Wild, and Deacon Benjamin Hodges, to this committee of the church. A candidate is procured. He

came and preached a few Sundays; was acceptable to a portion of the parish and church.

They are now about to choose a gospel teacher. It is with them a momentous affair, a solemn event; and they would not undertake such a work without due preparation. The special interposition of the Almighty must be invoked; and hence, June 12, 1749, the church "voted that thursday, the twentieth of this instant June, should be held as a day of fasting and praier to God for his direction in the settling a pastor over them."

On the same day, June 12, Joshua Pomroy, Ebenezer Eddy, John Briggs, 2d, Benjamin Cobb, Josiah Newland, Benjamin Copeland, Benjamin Newcomb, Bartholemew Burt, John Briggs, 3d, Daniel Braman, Jonathan Knap, Samuel Dean, Sylvanus Braman, Seth Smith, and Benjamin Hodges, petition the Precinct Committee to call a precinct-meeting "To make choice of some man that is a Learned orthodox man to settel in ye worke of ye Gospell ministry amongst us of sd. Precent."

The fast is, no doubt, observed with becoming solemnities. They are now ready to take action. July 3, 1749, at a church-meeting, —

"3ly, The church voted, whereas this church was settled a congregational church, and have voted the church-platforme for their Rule of discipline, they do now make choice of Mr. Eliakim Willis to setell with them in the ministry, and to be their paster; and this church to be governed according to the rule of discipline as sett fourth in sd. Church-platforme."

On the same day, the parish concurred in the choice of Mr. Willis as their minister, and —

"Made choice of George Leonard, Esqr., Capt. Simeon Wetherell, and Mr. Benjamin Cobb, to be a Committee to Present a copy of the sd. church and precinct's votes in making choice of him for theyr minister, and do theyr Endeavor to obtain him to come and Preach with us; and also to treet with sd. Mr. Willis about his settling with us, and make Report at the next Precinct-meeting; and to obtain some minister to supply the Pulpit untill Mr. Willis can come."

There is a minority who are opposed.

“Capt. Wm. Stone appeared, and protested against the chusing Mr. Willis to be our minister. John Wild, Nathaniel Dunham, Ebenezer Burt, Eliphalet Hodges, Edmund Hodges, Nehemiah Fisher, and James Godfrey, protested against chusing Mr. Willis or any other minister at this time. Samuell Clapp, Junior, protests against chusing Mr. Willis, or any other, without further tryall. Thomas morey protests against chusing any that we have heard already.”

But the majority, having chosen a minister, seem determined to settle him, if possible. They call a parish-meeting, Aug. 21, 1749, and “Voted that they would give to Mr. Eliakim Willis 400 pounds, old Tenner, for a settlement.” They voted to give him three hundred pounds, in bills of credit of the old tenor or other money, a year for his salary, to be as good as bills of credit of this Province of the old tenor now are, in proportion to silver at fifty-five shillings an ounce, provided he settled with them in the work of the ministry.

They also voted that George Leonard, Esq., Capt. William Stone, and Mr. Benjamin Cobb, should be a committee to present these votes to Mr. Eliakim Willis for his acceptance.

Mr. Willis declined settling in the following note:—

“To the first chh. of christ in norton, and the society usually meeting with them: grace, mercy, and Peace.

“Honr’d and Beloved, —

“Whereas you gave me an Invitation (some time since) to settle with you in the work of the gospel ministry, with proposals inconsiderable and insufficient for a subsistence therein, — These, therefore, are to inform you, that I am convinced it is not my duty to comply with your Invitation. that the great Head of the church would, in due time, be pleased to Favour you with a wise and faithful Pastor, is the desire and Prayer of your Friend and Brother in the Faith and Fellowship of the gospel,

“ELIAKIM WILLIS.

“DARTMOUTH, Sepr. 16th, 1749.

“To Deacon Briggs, to be communicated to ye chh. and society of ye South Precinct in Norton.”

Of Mr. Willis I have been able to obtain but little information. He is supposed to have been born in Dartmouth, in this county, Jan. 9, 1714. He came from there when he entered college; and that place seems to have been his home when he preached at Norton. He entered Harvard College at the age of eighteen, and graduated from that institution in 1735. He was ordained pastor over the second parish in Malden (which has since been united with the first), Oct. 25, 1752; and died March 14, 1801, aged eighty-seven.¹

From receipts now in my possession, — one dated May 22, the other Dec. 28, 1849, — it appears that Mr. Willis preached seventeen sabbaths in Norton during that year.

The declination of the call to settle by Mr. Willis, no doubt, was a source of gratification to one party, and a disappointment to the other. A new candidate must now be procured to run the gauntlet between the opposing factions of church and parish.

The curtain of oblivion happily hides from our view most of their private bickerings; and we have no desire to uplift it. It withdraws itself, however, sufficiently often to enable us to understand the actual state of affairs.

Though without a minister, the parish are determined to maintain the stated worship of God.

Feb. 5, 1749–50, it was “voted to raise four hundred pounds, old tenor, to Pay for supplying ye pulpit in sd. Precint;” and, at the same time, Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, John Briggs, 2d, and Jonathan Lincoln, were chosen a committee to join with a committee of the church in supplying the pulpit. But, still, bitterness and discord reign in the parish. A movement was made by the disaffected ones to divide the precinct. In the mean time, a candidate had been preaching, and his friends desired to settle him. On the 5th of March, 1749–50, the church chose Joseph Roberts for their minister. A parish-meeting is warned to meet

¹ Interleaved Triennial Catalogues of John L. Sibley, and Rev. J. Pierce, D.D.

March 20, to act upon the above vote of the church ; and also to act upon the petition of the east part of the south precinct, that said precinct be divided into two precincts, or parishes.

At the meeting, March 20, "after a long debate on the Petition of some of the inhabitants of ye Easterly Part of this Precint, there was a vote called for to know whether they would act any further on sd. Petition ; and it Passed in the negative."

At this meeting, the parish concur with the church in inviting Mr. Roberts to be their minister. They offer him as a settlement one hundred pounds, lawful money ; half to be paid the first, and half the second year after his ordination.

"And also the sum of sixty-six pounds, thirteen shillings, and fourpence, Lawful silver money, or other money or Bills of Credit, Equal in value thareto, that Pass current in Payments between man and man, at the Respective times of Payments ; which he shall have each and every year, so long as he Continues with us in the work and office of the ministry."

George Leonard, Esq., Capt. Simeon Wetherell, and Deacon Benjamin Hodges, were appointed a committee "to waight on Mr. Joseph Roberts, and Present him a copy of the abovesd. Precint's vote, and to treet with him about his settling," &c.

Mr. Roberts takes time to consider upon the matter ; and, in a letter, declines in these words :—

"To the Church of Christ here in Norton ; wishing grace, mercy, and Peace.

"As you, the first Church of Christ, and the Congregation appertaining unto you, Some time since gave me, the subscriber, an Invitation to settle with you in the work of the Gospell ministry, as your Pastor and minister, — these may signify unto you, that I have deliberated upon this Important affayer, and advised both with Relations and others ; and from some things in this Place, as well as a disinclination to settle here, under some circumstances, among you, I am inclined, and think it best, to determine in the Negative. And

although I have not been able to let you know this before now, is because I have been Greatly Perplexed in my mind about you and the other place, where I have a call to settle, whereby I have been at the greatest nonplus what to do. I hope none of the People of this Place will either be offended or Grieved with me in not giving my answer sooner, since Providence prevented by sickness, and my being perplexed with two calls at one and the same time. I conclude this Reply to your Invitation in the words of the apostle : ' Finally, brethren, farewell! be perfect; be of Good comfort; be of one mind; live in Peace; and the God of love and Peace shall be with you.'

"I am yours, &c.,

"JOSEPH ROBERTS.

"NORTON, September 29th, 1750."

The internal dissensions to which he alluded had, no doubt, a great influence in causing him to give a negative answer. We hope the people profited by his apostolic exhortation at the close of his letter.

Mr. Roberts was from Boston, where he was born Jan. 8, 1718. He graduated at Harvard, 1741; and was ordained at Leicester, Oct. 23, 1754; being the third minister settled in that place. But, ere eight years had elapsed, difficulties arose between him and his people, "which were referred to an Eccl. Council, who recommended a dissolution of the Pastoral Connection." He was accordingly dismissed Dec. 15, 1762. After his dismissal, he removed to Weston; and died there April 30, 1811, aged ninety-three (?). "His mental powers were of a high order; and, for many years, he was a useful man in civil life."—"He took an active part in the American Revolution, as one of the committee of the town to enlist and provide for the soldiers. He was a member of the Convention that formed the Constitution of Massachusetts; and, after his death, there was found among his papers a draught, in his own handwriting, of a form of government, many of the provisions of which have been incorporated into our present State Constitution. He represented the town of Weston several years in the General Court. He lived and died a bachelor. His

usefulness and respectability were much diminished by being connected with a speculation in business, by which he became involved in lawsuits, and lost much of his property. His temper was soured, and he became disgusted with the world; so that he retired, and spent the remainder of his days, as a hermit, in obscurity."¹

From a receipt given March 21, 1749-50, it is inferred that he had then preached in Norton thirteen Sundays. From the parish-records, we conclude that he preached more than thirteen sabbaths.

Again the parish must go forth in quest of a candidate.

Aug. 15, 1751, the parish "Voted that no person shall preach in the meeting-house in sd. Precint but such as shall be procured by the Committee of sd. Precint and Church, till the further order of this Precint;" and, to make the matter doubly sure, they vote "that the key shall be delivered to sd. Comtee." This shows that harmony was not yet restored to the parish.

On the 30th of August, 1751, the church gave a call to Mr. Elijah Lathrop to settle as their minister; and, on the 30th of September following, the parish concur in the choice, and offer Mr. Lathrop, as a settlement, £133. 6s. 8d. lawful money, and £66. 13s. 4d. yearly salary. George Leonard, Esq., Mr. Benjamin Cobb, and Deacon Benjamin Hodges, were "chosen a committee to present a copy of ye above-written votes to ye abovesaid Mr. Lathrop, and to treet with him about settling with them as abovesd." Mr. Lathrop did not accept the call. No written answer to the invitation has been found. He was born in Windham, Conn., about the year 1724. He was educated at Yale College, and graduated from that institution in 1749. In 1752, he was settled over the "Gilead Society" in Hebron, Conn., as a Congregational minister.

"He performed the duties of a priest, to the acceptance of his people, until 1797; when he died, aged seventy-three.

¹ American Quarterly Register, vol. x. pp. 60, 61.

His moral character was good; his talents, an average of country clergymen, whose services were purchased for life for a small farm, a house, \$250, and twenty cords of wood, per year, during life.”¹

Other candidates now entered the field: none, however, are invited till the willing candidate is found of whom we shall speak in the succeeding chapter.

From receipts by them signed for services rendered, it is certain that six other individuals preached in Norton during the time the church was destitute of a pastor. Whether all preached as candidates is uncertain: probably all did not. I have been able to ascertain a few items, in the history of these individuals, which may not be altogether uninteresting to the reader; and therefore take the liberty to record them in this connection. Mr. Edward Bass preached at Norton “four sabbaths and one Fast Day” previous to July 8, 1749. He was born in Dorchester, Nov. 23, 1726. He entered Harvard College before he was fourteen years old, and graduated from that college in 1744. After graduating, he taught school till he took the degree of A.M. In 1752, by invitation of the Episcopal society of Newburyport, he went to England; and, on the 24th of May of that year, “was ordained by the excellent Dr. Thomas Sherlock, then Bishop of London.” He returned, and took charge of the society in Newbury, the same year. In 1796, he was unanimously elected, by the Episcopal churches of Massachusetts, to the office of bishop; and was consecrated in Christ’s Church, May 7, 1797. He was afterwards elected Bishop of Rhode Island; and the churches in New Hampshire put themselves under his jurisdiction. He died September, 1803, after an illness of two days, aged almost seventy-seven. “He was a sound divine, a critical scholar, an accomplished gentleman, and an exemplary Christian.”²

¹ Letter of Hon. John S. Peters, M.D.

² See Sibley’s *Interleaved Triennial*; *Massachusetts Historical Collections*, vol. ix.; and Rev. James Morss’s *Sermon at Newburyport*, Jan. 6, 1811.

Previous to Oct. 8, 1749, Mr. Thomas Jones preached in Norton "three sabbaths and the Thanksgiving." He was from Dorchester, and was born April 20, 1721; graduated at Harvard, 1741. He was invited by the church to settle in Stoughton; but "the precinct, being equally divided, were unable to obtain a vote of concurrence."¹ He was ordained at Woburn, Jan. 2, 1751; and died suddenly, on sabbath-day, March 13, 1774, of apoplexy, with which he was seized in the pulpit, at the close of the prayer in the morning service."²

Mr. Naphtali Daggett preached four Sundays before Oct. 29, 1750. He was born in Attleborough, Sept. 8, 1727; and was the second of eight children. His father died when he was quite young. In 1748, he graduated from Yale College; and, in 1751, was ordained at Smithton, L.I. In September, 1755, he was chosen Professor of Divinity at Yale; and from Sept. 10, 1766, to April 1, 1777, he was the acting president of the college. When the British attacked New Haven, in July, 1779, he took an active part in the defence of the town; and died (in consequence of wounds received on that occasion) Nov. 25, 1780, aged fifty-three. He is reported to have been "a good classical scholar, well versed in moral philosophy, and a learned divine."³

Jonathan Dorby preached at Norton, "April 14th and 21st," 1751. He was the son of Capt. Eleazer and Mary (Cushing) Dorby, of Boston; and was born Sept. 13, 1726; graduated at Harvard, 1747; was settled over the Second Church in Scituate, Nov. 13, 1751. He went to Hingham to exchange with Rev. Mr. Gay, and was there taken with a fever at the house of Gen. Benjamin Lincoln's father; and died after an illness of five days, April 22, 1754, aged twenty-eight. He is described as "a man of moderate stature, fair complexion, round features, and blue eyes;

¹ E. Richmond's Sermon on leaving the Old Church in Stoughton, May 22, 1808.

² See Interleaved Triennials at Harvard-College Library; and American Quarterly Register, vol. xi.

³ See Daggett's History of Attleborough.

in his manners, graceful and winning; using much familiarity in his intercourse with his people, without disgusting; and entering their dwellings like a son and a brother. As a preacher, he was lively and interesting.”¹

Joseph Green, jun., supplied the pulpit in Norton “nine days, in the year 1751.” He was born in Barnstable, Sept. 12, 1727; and was the son of Rev. Joseph Green, of that town. He graduated at Harvard, 1746; was ordained at Marshfield, Feb. 21, 1753; and resigned his pastoral office, Jan. 9, 1759. He was subsequently installed over the First Church in Yarmouth, Sept. 15, 1762; and died Nov. 5, 1768.²

Mr. Samuel Angier preached at Norton before Feb. 3, 1752, — probably not as a candidate. He was born at Cambridge, July 15, 1722; and was the son of Edmund Angier. He graduated at Harvard, 1748; and was probably never ordained as a minister. He taught school for a time at Medford; and died Aug. 23, 1775.² Whether other unsuccessful candidates preached during the vacancy of the pulpit is unknown.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SETTLEMENT, MINISTRY, AND DEATH OF REV. JOSEPH PALMER.

“He tried each art, reproved each dull delay;
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.”

GOLDSMITH.

THUS far, in their attempts to settle a pastor, disappointments have met the church and parish at every turn. But, though defeated in their laudable and repeated efforts to establish a permanent ministry among them,

¹ See Interleaved Triennials at Harvard-College Library, and Deane's History of Scituate.

² Sibley's and Winthrop's Interleaved Triennials.

they were by no means discouraged. With praiseworthy zeal and energy, they pressed on towards the goal of their desire ; and, as a reward of their faithfulness, success is about to crown with rejoicing the unwearied endeavors to secure a shepherd for the flock.

A candidate has been preaching to them for some weeks. He is acceptable to a large part of the church and parish. The church, agreeably to a long-established custom, take the initiatory steps to secure his permanent services as a teacher of righteousness. A meeting is duly warned and held. Deacon Benjamin Hodges, who seems, after the dismissal of Mr. Avery, to have been a sort of standing moderator of all the church-meetings, was called to preside over the solemn deliberations of the assembled church ; and, no doubt, offered an earnest prayer to God for direction in the important business immediately before them, and for the spirit of union and harmony in the selection of a gospel teacher about to be made. We now quote the record : —

“At a meeting of the first church of Christ in Norton, held at Norton South precinct meeting-house on ye 20th day of Aprill, 1752, the said church made choice of Mr. Joseph Palmer to be their minister, and to settle with them in the work of the ministry (this church being a Congregational church) ; And they made choice of Capt. William Stone, John Briggs, and Jonathan Hodges, 2d, a committee to present the above-sd. vote to the first precinct or parish in sd. Norton for their concurrence.”

On the 11th of May following, at a meeting held for that purpose, the parish —

“Voted and concurred [in] the before-written vote of sd. church in chusing Mr. Joseph Palmer for their minister, Provided he settle with them for one hundred and thirty-three pounds, six shillings, and eightpence, Lawful money, as a settlement ; one-half thereof to be paid in a year after he shall settle with them, and the other half in two years.

“3dly, Voted to give the sd. Mr. Palmer the sum of sixty-six pounds, thirteen shillings, and fourpence, Lawful money,

for a salary, yearly and every year, so long as he shall continue and remain their Minister, provided he settle with them as aforesd.

"4thly, They made choice of George Leonard, Esq., Capts. William Stone, and Simeon Wetherell, and Mr. Benjamin Hodges & Samuel Dean, a committee to present ye abovesd. vote to the Mr. Palmer, and to use their interest with him to settle with them as aforesd."

Mr. Palmer returned the following answer:—

"To the First chh. of Christ in, and Inhabitants of, the first Parish of Norton.

"Dearly Beloved in the Lord, — Inasmuch as it has pleased almighty God, the wise govenour of the world, to permit a seperation between you and your late Rev. Pastor; and, since this seperation, to incline you so far to pursue your own best interest as to be desirous of resettling the Gospel Ministry amongst you; and since he from whom every man's Judgment proceeds, who has the Hearts of all men in his Hands, has inclined you to choose me for your minister (unworthy as I am), as appears by a Copy of your Votes some Time since presented to me; and having, as I trust, with a serious Concern to promote God's glory & holy kingdom, both in myself and you, taken into consideration your Invitation of me to settle among you in the work of the gospel ministry, and have been importunate with God for Direction, and asked advice of men, — [I] am determined to accept of your Invitation, with only asking that you would please to make an addition to the offers you made me for my support: and that is, viz., to supply me with a sufficiency of firewood; It being no more than what is of late common with Towns and Parishes to do. and, by your granting this, I do accept of your Invitation; Trusting in the great Head of the church for assistance in the important service, and in your Goodness for a comfortable support, if what you have already proposed, and may now farther add for that Purpose, should prove insufficient. Desiring your earnest prayers to God for me,

Joseph Palmer

"CAMBRIDGE, Sept. ye 15th, 1752."

This letter was read at a parish-meeting held Sept. 27; and then —

“The sd. Precint voted, that they Look upon what they have already voted to Mr. Joseph Palmer for his support amongst us, in case he should settle with us in the work of a Gospell minister, to be sufficient for his support; and as much, as we cannot think it our duty at present to give any more: therefore vote not to add any more to it towards Providing of firewood for him; and desire him to accept of what we have already offered.”

It is uncertain how the matter was settled: but Mr. Palmer undoubtedly withdrew his request about firewood; for, a few days subsequent to the vote of the precinct, he communicated his final answer. As he was then at Norton, possibly some verbal arrangement relative to firewood might have been made; but probably not.

“To the first church of christ in, and Inhabitants of, the first precinct in Norton.

“Dearly Beloved in the Lord, — whereas you have once and again (by your votes) manifested a desire of my settling with you in the work of the gospell ministry, I would now Inform you that I am determind and do accept of your Invitation, upon the offer you made me for my support; Trusting in your goodness for a comfortable maintenance, if what you have ofered should not be sufficient; and desire your prayers to almighty God that I may be a faithfull Pastor.

“JOSEPH PALMER.

“NORTON, October ye 25th, 1752.”

Preparations were then vigorously made for the ordination. A church-meeting was held Nov. 10, 1752, Benjamin Hodges, moderator; and it was —

“Voted, they would ordain Mr. Joseph Palmer as sune as they could conveniently.

“3ly, The church voted that the church-covenant should be red; and it was red: and they gave their assent to it by the sine of lifting the hand.”

Benjamin Hodges and William Stone were chosen a committee to invite Mr. Palmer to meet with the

church at an adjourned meeting, Nov. 17. At the adjourned meeting, "the church voted that they would ordayne Mr. Joseph Palmer upon the first wendsday of Jenuary insuing the vote hearof." They also voted to send "to 10 churches to assist in the ordaining Mr. Palmer;" and Col. George Leonard, John Andrews, Benjamin Hodges, and William Stone, were appointed a committee to sign the letters-missive to the churches. On the same day (Nov. 17, 1752), a copy of the original covenant (see page 68) of the church was brought forward, with the names of the original members attached to it. This covenant had been read and accepted, as we have seen, the week previous: and they now renew it, and deliberately and solemnly affix their names to the sacred instrument; for underneath the covenant is the following record, and the autographs of those who repledged themselves to the duties of their Christian profession: —

"We the subscribers, members of the first church of Christ in Norton, Having Read the Church-Covenant which our Fathers entered into when this church was first Geathred in this place, and voted our consent thereto (it Being a Congregationell Church), do now, in the Presance of God, Renew the same by subscribing our names thareto, this 17th day of November, 1752. John Andrews, Benja. Hodges, George Leonard, John Austin, Samuel Clap, Ebenezer Eddy, Daniel Braman, John Wild, William Stone, Nathaniel Dunham, Samll Dean, William Coddington, Benja. Cobb, Seth Smith, Thomas Shepard, Jonathan Knap, Israel Fisher, 2d, Ephraim Lane, 2d, Benja. Copeland, Bartholomew Burt, William Haradon, Silvanus Braman, Philep Cooye, Benja. Newcomb, Jonathan Hodges."

"Dec. 8th, 15thly, sd. Precint made choice of Capt. William Stone, Capt. Simeon wetherel, and Benjamin Cobb, for a committee to treet with and agree with some person or persons to provide Provisions and things necessary, and entertainment, for the ordination of Mr. Joseph Palmer; and then they made choice of Joseph Hodges and Jonathan Hodges to take [care] that on ye ordination-day there be sets in ye meeting-house Kept for ye council and ye church."

The church-records simply state the date of Mr. Palmer's ordination. On the parish-records, all I find is the following memorandum : —

"That, on the 3d day of January, A Domini 1753, the before-named Mr. Joseph Palmer was ordained the Pastor of the church of Christ in this Precint, by a council of twelve churches.

"Attest :

"GEORGE LEONARD, Jr.,

"Precint-Clerk."

The record of the church-meeting, Nov. 10, 1752, says, as we have seen, that ten churches were invited; and the names of those churches are given as follows : —

"The first church in Rochester [Rev. Timothy Ruggles]; the church in Cambridge [Rev. Nathaniel Appleton]; the first and 2d churches in Stotun [Rev. Samuel Dunbar, now Canton, and Rev. Philip Curtis, now Sharon]; the church in Raynham [Rev. John Wales]; the first and 2d churches in Lankister [Rev. Timothy Harrington and Rev. J. Mellen]; the 2d church in Attleborough [Rev. Peter Thatcher]; the church at Miltun [Rev. Nathaniel Robbins]; the first church of Wrentham [Rev. Joseph Bean]."

The following extract from Rev. Mr. Dunbar's records has been kindly furnished me by S. B. Noyes, Esq., of Canton, which throws some light upon the ordination services. Mr. Dunbar's record reads thus : —

"Jan. 3d, 1753. — Myself and the chhs.' messengers attended and assisted in the ordination of Rev. Mr. Joseph Palmer over the 1st chh. in Norton. The Rev. Mr. Wales, of Raynham, began with prayer; Mr. Mellen, of Lancaster [now Sterling], preached; Mr. Leonard, of Plymouth, gave the charge; and I gave the right hand of fellowship."

The parish-records say, as we have seen, that twelve churches composed the "council." The church-records name only ten churches. Mr. Dunbar's record shows that "Mr. Leonard, of Plymouth," took part in the services. His church would make the eleventh. Most likely, the church in the North Precinct (Rev. Ebenezer White's) was the twelfth church represented.

The sermon of Mr. Mellen was printed ; and a copy of it may be found in the Athenæum Library, at Boston, "B. 228," p. 285. The text was 1 Tim. vi. 3. The subject of the sermon was *the Duty of Ministers to preach Doctrines of Practice* ; and it was well calculated to heal the dissensions which had been rife in the church and society for some years ; for it breathed a truly Christian spirit. The tenor of the discourse may be inferred from the following extracts from the "Improvement : " —

"Freedom of Enquiry in Matters of Religion, with Prudence and Virtue, ought not only to be tolerated, but encouraged and urged, especially by the Ministers of Righteousness ; and party Distinctions and *hard names*, as much as possible, laid aside ; according to the wholesome Advice of our pious Fore-Fathers, whose words are these : ' Let the Nick-Names of *Zwinglians* and *Calvinists* then cease, — the Marks rather of Faction than brotherly Union. What should we have to do with Luther ? What should we have to do with Calvin ? We profess the Gospel ; we believe the Gospel.'

"*Lastly*, Forasmuch as it is Matter of Fact that Mankind do, and always must, think differently from each other with Regard to Things of little or no Importance in Religion, — that is, which have no considerable Influence upon Practice one way or the other, — a *catholic Spirit* among all Parties ought by all Means to be promoted toward each other in different Opinions and Practices.

"Nothing is so much wanted to set the Christian world right as a Spirit of *universal love* and *Charity*. A blind, uncharitable Zeal about uncertain Opinions and circumstantial Things, like the 'Worm at the Root of *Jonah's Gourd*, tends to eat out the Vitals of true Religion.' And, about these precarious & controversial Things, some *pious, peevish* Men think they do well to be angry, and are ready (with Pope Paul the fourth, upon his Death-Bed) to recommend (if not the *Inquisition*, as he did, yet) very severe and unchristian Methods for the Cure of these Evils. But did our meek Lord teach such a Doctrine as this ? Does the Gospel countenance Persecution for Conscience' Sake ? or could any Thing but Matter of Fact be sufficient to prove the Cruelties that have been exercised by Christians one upon another ? One of the most pernicious Errors in the World seems to be this, — that

Men are to be ill treated for their *harmless* Opinions. *Charity* is the most perfect Bond of Union among Christians, and is *greater* than Faith itself; and, where there are the greatest Measures of this, on *that Side* there is doubtless most Truth and most Religion."

In his address to the pastor elect, he says, —

"Your Office is to build up the Redeemer's Kingdom among Men, in Opposition to the Powers of Darkness; to preach the Doctrines of Godliness, and reform a vicious World; and thereby promote the glorious Design of that Gospel of which you are made a Minister. Let, therefore, the Height of your Ambition be to serve the Interests of *Truth and Virtue*. . . .

"Be an *honest* Inquirer after Truth — seek not the Applause of Men, of any Party or Character; but the Approbation of God and your own Conscience. If you have the *Happiness* to keep up the Reputation of your *Orthodoxy*, you will find a mighty Advantage in it: like *Charity*, it will cover a Multitude of Sins. But this you may lose among some, and yet be a Friend to Truth. . . .

"There will be always some *ignorant, presumptuous, and superstitious* Men that will set themselves to oppose the Truth which is after Godliness, and the Preachers of it. In *Meekness* these must be instructed; for the Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all Men, apt to teach, patient.

"From such as vapour about Questions and needless Controversies tending to Schism and Ungodliness, turn away: But Speak thou the Things which become *sound Doctrine* (Tit. ii. 1); namely, that Men of all Ages and Relations behave suitably to their Characters, old and young, bond and free; for in this way, both of *Preaching* and *Practising*, are Christians to look for the blessed Hope, and glorious Appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

In his address to the members of the society, he says, —

"*Bretheren*, You are all one Body, and you should endeavour to be all one Soul; that is, you should be all of the same Mind toward each other's *Persons*, tho' differing from each other in Sentiments: hereby endeavoring to preserve the Unity, 'not of Opinion in the Bond of Ignorance, not of

Practise in the Bond of Hypocrisy, but the *Unity* of a Catholic Christian Spirit in the Bond of Peace & Love.’”

In a note to this last sentence, he says, —

“Unity of Opinion there cannot possibly be, or seem to be, unless men are equally wise and in the same Circumstance of Light, or equally wicked or Hypocritical, in making the same Profession. In no Principles, therefore, can there be Unity among Men, but in the one uniform Principle of the *Love of Truth*. This I take to be the true unity of Spirit; which, when joined to the Bond of Peace and Righteousness of Life, makes a really virtuous and good Man.”

Quite an account was made, in those days, of the ordination occasions. They were not such every-day affairs as they have become in these later times; and hence quite a parade was made in getting up the ordination dinner, which was really one of the most important features of the day. We have already seen that a committee was appointed to attend to this matter. Jan. 23, 1753, they made report that they had “agreed with George Leonard, Esq., to provide for sd. ordination; and he has done it: and we have exam’d. sd. Leonard’s accounts, and agreed that he shall have twenty-one pounds, six shillings, and Eightpence, Lawful money, for his providing as aforesd.”

The records do not show that there was any particular opposition to the call and settlement of Mr. Palmer; yet it is very probable there was a minority opposed to him. Subsequent events will show that the flames of strife were not entirely extinguished. It is evident there were two parties, and that one was rather disposed to dislike what the other liked. Rev. Isaac Braman, of Georgetown, a native of Norton, and son-in-law of Rev. Mr. Palmer, in a letter to me, says, —

“When Father Palmer preached as a candidate for settlement, there were two men, either of whom loved to have the pre-eminence; and were always, in regard to public matters, somewhat jealous of each other. Judge Leonard said to Mr. Palmer, ‘I want you to settle here; but don’t you

tell Capt. Stone.' Capt. Stone said, 'I want you to be our minister; but don't you let judge Leonard know it.' Not knowing each other's minds in the matter, they were good friends to the minister during their lives."

Judge Leonard was one of the leading opponents of Mr. Avery: and Mr. Stone was probably one of Mr. Avery's friends; for I cannot find that he ever took part in the war against Mr. Avery. And, besides, Capt. Stone's son Nathaniel married a connection of Mrs. Avery, as it is presumed, she being one of the legatees named in Mrs. Avery's will. These facts will, no doubt, enable us to understand why the two men should approach Mr. Palmer as they did. It will be seen, by reference, that Messrs. Leonard and Stone were first named on the committee to inform Mr. Palmer that he had been invited to settle. This was done, no doubt, in order to secure the good-will of both parties. At any rate, it may be regarded as fortunate that both these men were favorably disposed towards Mr. Palmer.

There is little to record during the ministry of Mr. Palmer. He entered, it is true, upon his duties under very peculiar and embarrassing circumstances. The late minister had been dismissed and deposed from the holy office. He was still an inhabitant of the town, and had some strong adherents, who felt that he had been misused, — unjustly compelled to vacate the pulpit he had occupied so long. They would naturally be jealous of whoever should assume the sacerdotal robes. There is sufficient evidence to show that the spirit of strife and ill-feeling was not entirely subdued at the time Mr. Palmer was inducted into the pastoral office. There were still some who seemed to regard the Platform of Church Discipline of more importance than a truly devout and holy life. Mr. Palmer was liberal in his religious views, — certainly as liberal as was Mr. Avery; and hence the opposers of Mr. Avery gained nothing by the change. He was no more in favor of ruling elders or of ordaining deacons than the former pastor; and probably no serious attempt was

made for such a purpose. Soon after the settlement of Mr. Palmer, Rev. Mr. Prentice, of Easton, — whom we regard as an intermeddler in the affairs of this church, and probably one of the chief instigators to the dismissal of Mr. Avery, as we have already stated, — was himself obliged to leave his parish; and, shortly after, moved from this vicinity. This circumstance had, no doubt, a tendency to allay somewhat the spirit of discord that had reigned in the church and precinct so long. The church was in a distracted state, as we have said, at the settlement of Mr. Palmer. Within a year from his ordination, the following petition was put into his hands: —

“To the Reverend Pastor of ye first Church of Christ in Norton.

“We your Bretheren and humble petitioners’ Request is that you appoint a Church-meeting, to be as soon as may be Coveanint for the church to Com together, to Consult what is Best to be done in order to Reclame some of our Bretheren that hath withdrawn from our Communion; and also to act and doo what they Shall think Best to be done in the method of admiting ye members to communion.

“Dated in NORTON, Nov., A.D. 1753.

“THOMAS SHEPARD.

SETH SMITH.

JONATHAN KNAP.

SAMLL. DEANE.

JOSEPH NEWLAND.

BENJA. COBB.

BARTHOLOMEW BURT.”

Probably several church-meetings were held to consider this and other kindred matters, but without arriving at any definite result. On the back of the above petition of Samuel Deane and others is recorded the following memorandum, in the handwriting of Mr. Palmer: —

“A chh.-meeting [was held] immediately after the Lecture, on ye 5th day of June, 1754, at wh. all those Things wh. were proposed to be then considered were refered to another Time; viz., on Wednesday, at three of the clock in ye afternoon, — a Fortnight from yt day.”

Probably, as we shall soon see, other matters took up the time at the meeting, June 19; but another record, on the back of the same petition, tells us what action was finally taken : —

“At a chh.-meeting on ye 5 Day of August, 1754, [it] was voted by ye chh., yt ye within article (viz., to act and do what they shall think best to be done of admitting members to communion) be dismissed.”

Other troubles had in the mean time sprung up, and were now engrossing the attention of the church. John Briggs, 2d,¹ sends the church this letter : —

“To the first church of Christ in Norton.

“In answer to your request by your committy, dear brethren : My soul’s desire is, you’d consider the sollom covenant you Have made to God & with me, — to watch over me, & I you. Now, bretheren, in answer to a Good conseance, I must Tell you wharein I think you have gone conterarey to our Covenant. First, in Church-meetings, the church not being Willing to here a greaved brother, but, with hashness And anger, Give the agreaved brother the lie : & not deling In love and meekness as Christ Comanded ; for, if we love Not our brother whome we have seene, how shall we Love God, whome we have not seen ? Secondly, in not setteling mr. parmer, a Congregatinal minister, acording To platform, which the Church voted not to take any Into the church without the vote of the church ; wich Was one Cause the church dissmissed mr. avery. brethren, I wold have you seresly consider wether you deal one With another as members of christ body.

“The Request of John Briggs, 2d, of Norton.

“NORTON, May th 5, 1754.”

On the back of this letter is written, —

“In a church-meeting, June 19th, 1754, I, the subscriber, desire to withdraw the whole of ye first Reason, as mentioned

¹ This was not the John Briggs, 2d, who was dismissed from the deacon’s office, during Mr. Avery’s ministry, for being “disguised with strong drink ;” but he who, about that time, was called John Briggs, 3d : for John Briggs, 1st, or the eldest, or grand senior, died in 1750 ; and hence the two living would be respectively known as John Briggs, 1st and 2d.

in the within-exhibited Reasons of my withdrawing, by Reason that it is Rong, and I was mistaken tharein.

“JOHN BRIGGS, 2d.

“The chh. then gave him Liberty to withdraw ye same.

“JOS. PALMER, Pastor.”

“At a chh.-meeting on October ye 2d, 1754, It was proposed to consider and act upon ye within-mentioned reasons; But ye chh., by a vote, deferred ye same to ye next chh.-meeting, By Reason of ye Information yt ye subscriber could not conveniently attend this meeting.”

We have found no record of the proceedings at “ye next chh.-meeting.”

We now learn that George Briggs does not like the way things are managed, and neglects to meet with the church. Let us read his statement of grievances: —

“Bretheren, — I have not for some time met With you, by Reason of defucultyes & Stumbeling-Blocks in the way: first, in not haveing officers according to our Covenant; secondly, in takeing in half-way members; thirdly, in The way you Called & setteled a minister.

“GEORGE BRIGGS.

“JULY ye 30, the yeare 1754.”

On the back of this note is written, —

“On August ye 5th, 1754, the within-written Reasons were exhibited to ye chh. then met, by George Briggs, & were considered by ye chh., and by them were voted to be insufficient for his Seperating from them.

“JOS. PALMER, Moderator.”

“At a chh.-meeting on ye 2d Day of October, 1754, It was voted by ye chh., yt George Briggs be suspended from ye communion at ye Lord’s Table for his unjust withdrawing & seperating from ym.

“JOS. PALMER, Moderator.”

Probably about the same time, Bartholomew Burt became disaffected, and absented himself from the communion, as his letter will show: —

“To ye first church of christ in norton. honnored & beloved, — I have not for some time communed with you; for I think you have gone contarey to ye church-covenant, if not

to ye scriptures; that in ye first of corinthians, seventh chapter, in suffering brother to go [to] Law with brother, and Look upon it only a privat offence; altho' the accuser shall, from time to time, declare that ye accused was, he believed, Innocent of the charge he laid against him. and now, brethren, if this way be according to scripture, I must acknowledge my Ignorance, and pray that you may be enabled to Lead, gide, and direct me in the right way. and now, may God enable you and I to keep this solam covenant that we have entered into; that the sure mercyes of that covenant, which is well ordered and sure, may be our unfailing portion. so I desir to subscribe myself your brother in ye faith and order of ye gospel,

“BARTHOLOMEW BURT.”

These documents, and the action of the church in reference to them, enable us to understand somewhat the state of affairs at the commencement of Mr. Palmer's ministry.

It required a man of sound mind, great prudence, and sagacity, to harmonize all these conflicting elements, and pour out the soothing oil of the spirit of Jesus upon the troubled waters that had been casting up mire and dirt in the church for years. Happily, such a man was found in the person of the chosen minister. Rev. Mr. Prentiss, in his sermon at the ordination of Rev. Pitt Clarke, the successor of Mr. Palmer, in speaking to the society, refers to Mr. Palmer as their “late prudent, skillful, and faithful Pastor.” Tradition universally ascribes to him the same character. There are some yet among us who remember him well. They say he was not what is termed a “great preacher,” but testify that he had the reputation of being a good and faithful minister; which is far more important than splendid talents and fine oratorical powers, with few of the graces that made the character of Christ resplendent with heavenly light. Although there were no serious outbreaks in the church; although there are no records of ecclesiastical councils to assist in returning to the Christian fold some unruly members who had gone astray, or to dismiss the pastor; and but few church-meetings to

discipline the refractory or suspend the perverse, — yet Mr. Palmer was called to endure some trials and petty annoyances. Our revolutionary struggle took place during his ministry; and it would not be at all surprising, if he sometimes, at the end of the year, was *minus* a part or the whole of his salary. Provisions were high; money was scarce; a large family was growing up around him, with open mouths asking for bread, with shivering bodies calling for something wherewith to be clothed, — dependent principally, if not entirely, upon his salary for support. All these were, indeed, discouraging circumstances. But he trusted in Him who does not forsake the righteous, nor permit his seed to beg bread. In a letter to me, Rev. Isaac Braman says of him, —

“He gave himself wholly to the ministry; not laboring with his hands, as some have done, in order to eke out a scanty support. He was generally to be found in his study, when nothing special called him abroad in the parish. He probably felt more keenly than most clergymen the responsibility of his position. Mrs. Palmer has been heard to say, that in the early part of his ministry, when he drew near his church, he was so much agitated as to cause sickness at the stomach, and sometimes vomiting. His wife freed him, in an unusual degree, from family cares. She at one time took wool from one of the parish (Judge G. Leonard), and, with the help of her daughters, converted it into cloth, and returned the owner half of it. This must have cost them much labor, as there was no machinery in that day for carding, spinning, or weaving.”

Rev. Pitt Clarke, in his “Historical Sermon,” speaking of Mr. Palmer, says, —

“He suffered much from the depreciation of paper currency. Several attempts were made to make up the depreciation; but what little was added alienated the affections of some towards their worthy pastor, and diminished his society. Several became Baptists; some, Methodists. But, by his uncommon prudence and Christian deportment, he kept the greater part of the church and society together, and continued an able minister of the New Testament till his death.”

We here give a few extracts from the parish-records, which serve to corroborate the statement of Rev. Mr. Clarke.

At a society-meeting, Aug. 30, 1779, "3dly, voted to the Rev. Joseph Palmer four hundred pounds, as a gratuity for this present year." The currency was at this time very much depreciated. There was an article in the warrant for a parish, Feb. 28, 1780, "To take under consideration the Request of the Revd. Mr. Joseph Palmer for a further grant of money or produce to make up the great deficiency in his last year's salary, occasioned, in some measure, by Reason of the great depreciation of the currency since the last grant." At the meeting, there was voted to Mr. Palmer, "as a gratuity, in addition to his last year's salary for the year 1779, £1,000." This vote was immediately reconsidered, and £864 voted.

It was, no doubt, during this period of which we speak, that he addressed the following note "To the Honble. G. Leonard, Esqr." It shows the cheerfulness, the Christian spirit, in which he endured all the privations growing out of the distracted state of public affairs. It reads thus:—

"Hon'd Sir, — Please to sell (without present Pay, for money I have not), or lend me, two Bushels of Rye. if either, that which bests suits you.

"Your Friend & Servant.

"JOS. PALMER."

Mr. Palmer had, however, trials of a different character from these just enumerated. In addition to the withdrawment of some of his parish, who became Baptists and Methodists (which the good pastor took very seriously to heart), Ann Lee and the Shakers gave him much trouble. It is believed that some of those who embraced the Shaker notions were members of Mr. Palmer's church; and it must have been painful to him to have witnessed their apostasy, as he thought, from the church and parish their fathers had established. Of these Shakers, I hope to give some farther account in another place.

With the exceptions mentioned, so far as we can learn, Mr. Palmer's ministry was, in the main, peaceful and happy.

I am told, that, in the pulpit, he usually wore a very grave and serious countenance; but on one occasion, on rising up to offer a prayer, he was seen to smile. Some of his parishioners called him to an account for so heinous a sin, just as he was to address the throne of grace. The pastor declared it was from no feelings of levity or irreverence that he was betrayed into such a scandalous act, but it proceeded from the impulse of the moment, under the following circumstance; and we presume few who witnessed the affair were able to suppress a smile, if they did not do more than smile. It was customary in those days to wear wigs; and some of these wigs had a long "cue," or sort of tail, attached to them. Two men were seated in a pew, their long cues hanging over into the pew back of them, in which sat a roguish boy. He managed by some means to tie their cues together; so that, when the men rose up at the prayer, not moving exactly together, their wigs were pulled from their heads, and each one began to claw with all his might to save his wig. Mr. Palmer saw the predicament they were in, and was unable to repress the smile that immediately rushed across his face. This was the severest charge, so far as I can learn, that was ever brought against the second minister of Norton.

Mr. Palmer himself usually wore "a great white wig, [which,] on the head of a large, portly, and sober man, struck a dreadful awe on many, if not most, beholders." Rev. Mr. Braman, to whom I am indebted for many facts relative to Mr. Palmer, describes him out of the pulpit as "a gentleman of very grave and dignified deportment."

The people, during Mr. Avery's ministry, were accustomed to assemble themselves around the meeting-house door on Sunday, waiting to shake hands with their pastor as he passed into the house; and he endeavored to gratify them: hence, by some, he was thought to be an undignified man.

“When Mr. Palmer first preached at Norton, the people had not forgotten Mr. Avery, and collected around the door of the church, and opened to the right and left, — every one ready to take him by the hand as he passed through, as they were wont to do with their former minister. But, instead of gratifying them, he [Mr. P.] took off his hat, and walked, in a dignified manner, into the house. This taught them not to be too familiar; and they acted accordingly. It was formerly the custom, for those who wished to present notes requesting prayers, to give them to the minister before he entered the church; and no one offered a note to Mr. Palmer without first doffing his hat, and holding it until he had said what he wished, and was ready to leave.”

About a year after his settlement, or Jan. 8, 1754, Mr. Palmer bought of William Hodges seventy acres of land, bounded easterly by the North-Purchase line, south-easterly by Mr. Nathaniel Leonard's land and the river; all other parts bounded by William Stone's land and the Town Common. This land was on both sides of the road leading from the burying-ground, southerly to the river. A house and barn on it were occupied by George Hodges.

Whether Mr. Palmer built a new house or not, we do not know. Doubtless he did. He occupied this place after his marriage, during his life. His house stood easterly of the common burying-ground, a short distance southerly from Austin Messinger's house, just back of the two large elms. It was taken down some years ago; but the wall of the cellar is still in a tolerably good condition. The house-lot is now (1858) owned by the Braman heirs.

Rev. Joseph Palmer was descended from Stephen Palmer, who came from England to this country. It is, however, uncertain whether Stephen was the grandfather or great-grandfather of Rev. Joseph; nor are we informed at what time he came to America. Rev. Joseph Palmer was the sixth and youngest child of Stephen and Sarah (Grant) Palmer, of Cambridge. They lived in close proximity to the college buildings and grounds; and there, on the second day of September, 1729, was born Joseph, the second minister of

Norton.¹ He was educated in his native town, and graduated from Harvard College in 1747. He received the degree of A.M. from Harvard and Yale in 1753. March 10, 1757, he married Miss Sarah Eames, daughter of William Eames, of that part of Hopkinton which is now Holliston.

Their children were as follows:—

1. ANNA, born March 19, 1758. She married, June 22, 1784, Rev. George Morey, of Walpole, a native of Norton (see Collegiate History). Mrs. Morey died Dec. 10, 1809.

2. WILLIAM, born Jan. 24, 1760; and died April 5, 1771.

3. JOSEPH, born Nov. 5, 1762. He was generally, in after-life, known as "Capt. Palmer." He married Miss Jerusha Johnson, of Holliston. They had four children. He died in Roxbury, Aug. 5, 1824.

4. SARAH, born Dec. 2, 1764. She married, April 19, 1787, Dr. Samuel Morey, of Norton, a graduate of Yale College (see Collegiate History). Mrs. Morey died (aged nearly eighty-nine) July 10, 1853, while on a visit at the house of Dr. Rounds, of Norton; whose second wife is her grand-daughter.

5. STEPHEN, born Oct. 8, 1766. He graduated at Harvard, and was settled in the ministry at Needham. (See Collegiate History.)

6. LUCY, born Feb. 8, 1769. She married, Oct. 2, 1793, Rev. Edward Richmond, D.D., of Stoughton, a native of Middleborough, and a graduate of Brown University in 1789; who was ordained at Stoughton, Dec. 5, 1792. He was afterwards settled in the third parish of Dorchester, now Rev. Mr. Pike's society. They had but two children. Mrs. Richmond died June 8, 1810.

7. GEORGE, born April 27, 1771. He married, Oct. 1, 1794, Miss Nancy Danforth, of Norton; and

¹ His sister Bethiah married Rev. John Ellis, for some time minister at Norwich, Conn., and afterwards at Rehoboth; who was the grandfather of James P. Ellis, Esq., now of Taunton.

they had one child. He died at Sunkhays, Me., Dec. 26, 1809.

8. HANNAH, born June 12, 1773. She married, August, 1797, Rev. Isaac Braman, of New Rowley, now Georgetown. He was a native of Norton, and a graduate of Harvard (see Collegiate History). Mrs. Braman died Aug. 14, 1835.

Only three male descendants of the ancestor Stephen, bearing the name of Palmer, were living in 1834. Two of them were grandsons of Rev. Joseph Palmer, of Norton: the other was a grandson of Stephen, brother of Rev. Joseph. For these items of the descendants of Rev. Joseph Palmer, and for some account of the posterity of his brothers and sisters, I am indebted to Hon. George Morey, of Boston, son of Rev. Mr. Morey, of Walpole.

None of the writings of Rev. Joseph Palmer were ever published. Before his death, he ordered all his sermons to be destroyed; and his request was so faithfully executed, that not a single sermon of his is now known to be in existence. What should prompt such a request, it is difficult to determine.

Mr. Palmer continued to preach, and to perform other pastoral duties, probably, till within about a year of his death.

May 5, 1790, the parish chose Deacon Daniel Dean, Lieut. S. Smith, and Deacon Benjamin Pearson, a committee "to converse with the Rev. Mr. Palmer, and see if he is able to preach; and, if he is not able, to hire some candidate to supply the pulpit in the illness of Mr. Palmer."

March 28, 1791, the parish chose Deacon Benjamin Pearson, Deacon Seth Smith, Deacon Daniel Dean, Capt. Ephraim Lane, and Mr. Eleazer Clap, a committee to supply the pulpit in the time of the Rev. Mr. Palmer's sickness: and "voted, that the abovesaid committee apply to Mr. Palmer, and consult him respecting a candidate to supply the pulpit; and take his advice, and have him nominate some person, if he please."

This committee's duties were of short duration ; for in just one week, or on the 4th of April, 1791, Mr. Palmer left the cares and duties of earth behind, and entered upon the brighter scenes and nobler duties appertaining to the spirit-world.

The length of his ministry, from his ordination, was thirty-eight years, three months, and one day. His body was interred in the burying-ground on the Common. On his tombstone, we are told that —

“ His character was an assemblage of those eminent and endearing virtues which constitute the faithful pastor and exemplary Christian, the kind husband, the tender parent, the generous friend, and the good man.”

“ He taught us how to live ; and, oh ! too high
A price for knowledge, taught us how to die.”

Rev. Pitt Clarke says, “ He was a pious and exemplary Christian ; a sound divine ; a very prudent, faithful pastor.”

Rev. Stephen Palmer, of Needham, in his autobiography, speaks of his father thus :—

“ His complaint was of the paralytic kind. He had before received repeated attacks from this disorder ; and his health had been, for some years, much impaired. His constitution was always of a slender nature. He had to use much caution and prudence in regard to his health. A small degree of bodily exercise sensibly affected him. He was never able to labor ; but was, however, habitually studious : and divinity was his principal study. He was justly reputed for his professional knowledge ; and, in every view, was a thorough divine. I do not remember of ever asking him for the exposition of any passage of Scripture, but what he was ready to give an answer. He was remarkable for the regularity of his deportment. In his diet, and all his conduct, the rules of method were observed. In his habits he was neat as well as exact. He was naturally a man of strong and warm passions, but had them all under perfect government. He was habitually a person of the most consummate prudence. What he promised, he always endeavored punctually to perform.

“ Both my parents were very large ; and their children are inclined to be gross.”

Rev. Ebenezer Burt, of Athol, a native of this town, now nearly ninety-three years old, a few months since wrote me as follows:—

“I will relate one anecdote concerning him, which I think ought to be recorded for the honor of Mr. Palmer, and for an example for others to ‘go and do likewise.’

“He one year had two large, fat hogs; while his neighbor, Mr. James French, had but one (this Mr. French was a butcher). A mad dog passed by Mr. Palmer’s, leaving his property unharmed; but stopped at the yard of Mr. French, and bit his hog, so that it died. Mr. Palmer called on Mr. French to butcher his hogs. He asked him to come in the evening, and cut them up and salt them. Mr. Palmer asked him which was the best. Mr. French replied, they were both very nice, though one was a little the best. Mr. Palmer said, ‘God has spared mine, while you have lost yours: take the best for your family, and cut up the other for mine.’

“This shows that though he was ‘not rich,’ yet he was ‘generous.’”

At a parish-meeting, Jan. 30, 1792, it was, —

“2dly, Voted, that the standing committee of the parish go on, and settle with the heirs of the late Revd. Mr. Palmer respecting his salary.

“3dly, Voted, that in the settlement with sd. heirs, the salary be continued to the end of the time of the bearers of sd. deceased preaching to sd. parish.”

In explanation of this last vote, it may be stated, that it was customary in those times for the neighboring ministers to act as the pall-bearers of the deceased brother-clergyman; and then, each in turn, to preach gratuitously one Sunday in the pulpit made vacant by his death. Hence it was perfectly proper that the salary should be continued till the bearers had all preached.

We have only to add, that Mrs. Palmer continued to reside at Norton till after the marriage of her youngest daughter; when she bade adieu to this place as her home, and passed the remainder of her days among her children, — dividing her time in their respective families. “Her last illness was paralysis. She was taken

very suddenly on the 24th of April, which was her birthday, being seventy-two years old. She rode that morning from her daughter Richmond's at Stoughton to her daughter Morey's at Walpole; but, in about thirty minutes after she went into the house, she became speechless and senseless, and remained so till she died, — May 20, 1806." Her body was brought to Norton, and buried beside that of her husband.

CHAPTER XII.

ADMISSIONS TO THE CHURCH FROM 1714 TO 1791.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."
CHRIST.

IN this chapter we shall give the names of those "admitted to full communion" in the church during the ministry of Rev. Mr. Avery and of Rev. Mr. Palmer. When they were admitted by letter from other churches, the name of the town from which they came is given in parentheses. Mr. Avery, at first, kept his records on small sheets of paper; and a portion of these became mutilated before he copied them into a book. For some entire years the records are gone, and other years are only partially complete. In copying into a book, Mr. Avery recorded every letter or figure that was left on his original minutes. This will explain why, in some cases, the year is alone recorded without any names; or the names, wholly or in part, without any dates. The names of the original members of the church will be found on page 69. We here give the subsequent admissions, so far as they can be ascertained from the mutilated records: —

1714.

Anna, wife of George Leonard; Susannah, wife of John Wetherell, sen.; Bethiah, wife of Joseph Dunham; Experience, wife of Peter Aldrich; Widow Rebecca Briggs;

Mercy, wife of John Hodges; Widow Sarah Lane; Hannah, wife of Eleazer Fisher; Mary, wife of Thomas Grover; Mercy, wife of Richard Briggs (all by letter, from Taunton Church); Experience, wife of William Pratt (from Weymouth); Josiah White; and Susannah, wife of Israel Fisher (from Taunton).

1715.

Widow Esther Dunham; Mary, wife of Ephraim Grover; Andrew Grover, and Mary his wife; Widow Esther Gray; Widow Esther Newland (from Taunton); John Austin, and Sarah his wife; Joseph Hodges, and Bethiah his wife; Ephraim Lane; William Wetherell, sen.

1716.

Sarah, wife of Seth Dorman; Bethiah, wife of John Hall.

1717.

Mary, wife of Benjamin Caswell; Deborah Cambell.

1718.

John Briggs, 2d, and Hannah his wife (from Taunton); Ruth, wife of Ephraim Lane; Sarah Lane; Mary, wife of Samuel Hodges; Mary, wife of Ebenezer Eddy; John Finney, and wife Mary; Mary, wife of Samuel Converse, of Attleborough; Abiah Cambell.

1719.

Damaris, wife of Matthew White; Widow Mary Cambell; John Fisher; Elizabeth, wife of Samuel Clap; Daniel Braman.

1720.

Richard Stephens (from Taunton); and probably four or five others, whose names are lost.

1721, 1722, and 1723 (names lost).

1724.

William Stone; Sarah, wife of Joseph Avery; Widow Experience Rue; John Andrews; Joshua Atherton; Samuel Hodges (from Taunton); Benjamin Williams; William Pratt, sen.; Benjamin Lane; Mary, wife of John Fisher (from Preston).

1725.

Joseph Gray, sen.; Rachel, wife of George Leonard; Abigail Leonard; Joshua Shepherd; Elizabeth Shepherd; Lazarus Grover; Richard Briggs; Widow Sarah King; William Makepeace, and wife Experience.

1726.

Susannah, wife of Joseph Godfrey; Patience, wife of William White; Benjamin Cobb.

1727.

Widow Mary Burt; Elizabeth, wife of William Wetherell, sen.; Joannah, wife of Ichabod Eddy; Joshua Williams; Samuel Dean.

1728.

William Prat, jun.; Elizabeth, wife of Samuel Holmes; Ruth Allen; Tabatha, wife of Josiah Prat; Bethiah Danforth, of Taunton; Josiah Prat; Bethiah Adams.

1729.

John Lane, and wife Sarah; John Harvey, of Taunton, and wife; John Wales;¹ Ezra Skinner.

1730.

Jonathan Prat, and wife Abigail; John Wild, and wife Abigail (from South Church in Braintree); Hannah, wife of Israel Woodward (from Dedham).

1731.

Hannah, wife of John Hodges, jun. (from Middleborough); William Dean; Joan, wife of Joseph Gray, jun.

1732.

Eleazar Fisher, 2d, and wife Elizabeth; Nehemiah Fisher, and wife Sarah; William Harridon (from Taunton); Obadiah Eddy, and wife Susannah; Joseph Gray, jun.; Jonathan Newcomb.

1733.

Samuel Clap, sen., and wife Bethiah; Experience, wife of Nathan Hodges; Mahitable, wife of William Stone.

1734.

Abigail, wife of William Harridon; Mary, wife of Samuel Clap, jun. (from Stoughton); Ephraim Dunham, and wife Elizabeth (from Plympton); William Ware (from Wrentham); Elizabeth, wife of Andrew Grover; Hephzibah Lane (from Attleborough); Mildred Harridon (from Taunton); Anna, wife of Benjamin Fairbanks (from Sherborn); Deborah Newcomb (from Braintree); Elizabeth, wife of Nathaniel Dunham (from Taunton); Esther, wife of Ebenezer Hodges (from Boston).

¹ He was subsequently the first minister of Raynham.

1735.

George Hill, and wife Susannah (from Rehoboth); Deborah, wife of Samuel Vesey (from Braintree); Job Gilbert, and wife Mary (from Taunton); Thankful Briggs.

1736.

Joshua Pomeroy, and wife Mary (from Stoughton); William Pain and wife (from Malden); Sarah, wife of Samuel Eddy (from Rehoboth); Thomas Fillebrown (from Cambridge); Mary, wife of Joseph Tiffany (from Attleborough).

1737.

Benjamin Newcomb; George Allen and wife, and their sister Gay (from Stoughton).

1738.

Mercy Newcomb (formerly Everet, from Dedham); Patience Briggs (formerly Gay, from Stoughton).

1739.

Gershom Cambell; Widow Sarah Hill; Susannah, wife of George Hodges.

1740.

Widow Elizabeth Silley; Sarah, wife of Jonathan Lawrence; Bartholomew Burt; Gideon Basset; Benjamin Copeland and wife (from Second Church in Braintree); Israel Newland; Ephraim Andrews; Elizabeth Panny; Lydia, wife of William Cambell; Bethsheba, wife of Gideon Basset; Thomas Skinner, jun., and wife Abigail; John Hodges, sen.; Phineas Briggs, and wife Esther.

1741.

George Briggs; Margaret, wife of John King; Widow Jerusha King; John Briggs, 3d, and wife Lydia; Josiah Newland, and wife Abigail; Samuel Hodges; William Cambell; Naomi, wife of Ebenezer Burt; Mary Pollard; Hannah Silley; Damaris White.

1742.

Nathaniel Dunham, and wife Mercy; Sylvanus Braman; James Hill, of Attleborough; Jacob Newland; Thomas Shepherd; Jonathan Clap, and wife Sarah; Judith Newcomb; William Codington; Josiah White, jun., and wife Elizabeth; Anna, wife of Dr. William Ware; Phillip Cooye, and wife Abigail; Abigail Leonard; Solomon Finney; Mary Finney; John Finney; Anna, wife of William Cobb; Abigail Cobb;

Ruth, wife of Benjamin Willis; Seth Smith; Pricilla Briggs; Rachel Braman; Abiah Braman; Widow Mahitabel Tucker; Mary, wife of Nathaniel Wetherell, sen.; Francis Richardson, and wife Sarah; Mary Dunham; Ebenezer Eddy, sen.; Widow Mary Cobb; Bethiah, wife of William Codington (from Bridgewater); Ephraim Lane, jun.; Abigail, wife of William Leonard; Ichabod Eddy; Joshua Cambell, and wife Abigail (from Raynham).

1743.

Elizabeth, wife of Eliphalet Hodges; Mehitabel Briggs (from Dedham); Ephraim Wetherell, and wife Bathsheba; Widow Mary Leonard; John Hector (a negro).

1744.

Lydia, wife of Thomas Winchel.

1745.

Israel Fisher, jun.; Hannah, wife of Jonathan Lincoln, sen.; Jonathan Hodges (from Berkley).

1746.

Ithamar, wife of Israel Fisher, jun. (from Mansfield¹); Mary, wife of Benjamin Newcomb (from Dedham).

1747.

Jonathan Knap; Benjamin Hews (from Second Church, Norton); Samuel Dean, and wife Rachel (from Dedham).

1748.

Pero (a negro, from Rehoboth); John Gilbert, jun.; Naomi, wife of Joseph Hodges.

During Mr. Avery's ministry, there were one hundred and fifty-one who "owned" or "renewed the covenant," very few of whom were admitted to "full communion." Between the dismissal of Mr. Avery and the settlement of Mr. Palmer, there were probably some admissions to the church; but no records are to be found. There were also, so far as can be ascertained from the records, three hundred and seventy-five baptisms of children during the pastorate of Mr. Avery.

¹ This was doubtless Mansfield, Conn.

Admissions during Mr. Palmer's ministry : —

1753.

Ichabod Washburn, and Bethiah his wife (from Kingston); David Braman; Rebecca, wife of Joseph Lincoln, jun.; Seth Gilbert.

1754.

Margaret, wife of Benjamin Trow (from Windham); Miriam, wife of Joseph Hodges (from Weymouth).

1755.

Joseph Lincoln (from Taunton); John Fisher, and wife Mary (from Attleborough); Theodora Leonard; Mary, wife of James Godfrey; Mary, wife of Samuel Tucker; Martha, wife of Ebenezer Eddy.

1756.

Nathan Babbit; Abigail, wife of Nathan Babbit, jun.; Mary Woodward; William Cobb; Anna Woodward; David Williams.

1757.

Ruth Hunt; Jonathan Lincoln; Mehitable, wife of Jonathan Knapp; Phebe Clap; Noah Wiswall; Sarah Dean; John Braman; Lydia, wife of Elkanah Lincoln (from Taunton).

1758.

David Darby (from Weymouth); Ichabod Franklin, and wife Hannah; Joseph Newcomb, and wife Judah; the wife of Elkanah Willis.

1759.

Abigail Haradon; Sarah, wife of Benjamin Pearson.

1760.

Mary, wife of Eliphalet Briggs; Elizabeth, wife of Dr. Wheaton; Rev. Nathaniel Leonard (from Plymouth).

1761.

John Newland; Widow Mary Briggs; Abigail, wife of Capt. Jonathan Hodges.

1762.

Hannah, wife of Philip Hoar; Peter Makepeace, and wife Abigail; Abigail, wife of John Patten; Phebe, wife of Elkanah Crossman; Elizabeth, wife of Samuel Lane; Elizabeth, wife of John Hall.

1763.

Charity, wife of John Haradon.

1764.

Widow Hannah Andrews ; Josiah Vining.

1765.

Abigail, wife of David Smith.

1766.

David Smith ; Elizabeth Woodward ; Ruth Cheney ; Sarah, wife of Nathaniel Dunham ; Mary, wife of Samuel Newcomb ; Elijah Danforth, and wife Susannah ; Noah Woodward, and wife Mary ; Simeon Williams.

1767.

Mary, wife of Samuel Morey.

1768.

Benjamin Pearson.

1769.

Sarah, wife of Solomon Dunham.

1770.

John Hall ; Samuel Clap, jun. ; Mary, wife of Israel Trow.

1771.

Samuel Hunt, and Abigail his wife.

1772.

Susannah, wife of Jeremiah Newland (from Attleborough) ; Job Garey ; Lydia Burt ; Bethiah Braman ; Abner Tucker.

1773.

Abigail Verry ; Martha, wife of Nathaniel Briggs ; Nathaniel Briggs ; Eunice, wife of Joseph Hunt.

1774.

William Homes (from Boston) ; Experience, wife of Ichabod Perry ; Lois, wife of Isaac Fisher ; Simeon Wetherell.

1775.

Phebe, wife of Nathan Perry ; Daniel Dean ; David Clapp.

1776.

James Briggs, jun. ; Sarah, wife of Benjamin Wild.

1778.

Widow Barney.

1779.

Stephen Jennings; Widow Mary Makepeace.

1780.

Israel Woodward; Seth Smith; Ruth, wife of William Makepeace; Wealthy, wife of Josiah Hodges; John Crane, jun.; Seth Smith, jun., and wife Rachel; Widow Lydia Basset; Samuel Lincoln, jun.

1781.

Jacob Shaw; Sarah Dunham; Asa Copeland; Esther, wife of Capt. Seth Smith; Rachel, wife of John King; Naomi, wife of Tisdale Hodges.

1782.

Rachel Burt.

1783.

Anna Palmer.

1784.

Isaac Basset.

1785.

Joseph Phillips.

1786.

Calvin Crane.

1787.

Rachel, wife of Asa Copeland; Elizabeth, wife of Jonathan Briggs (from Sharon).

1790.

Stephen Palmer; Sarah, wife of Dr. Samuel Morey.

There were ninety-four persons who "owned" or "renewed the covenant" during Mr. Palmer's ministry, and six hundred and twenty-six baptisms of children.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SETTLEMENT, MINISTRY, AND DEATH OF REV.
PITT CLARKE.

"Think what the Christian minister should be;
You've then his character: for such was he."

UNKNOWN.

FOR the third time, the duty of selecting a minister devolves upon the church and society. One entire generation had passed away since Mr. Palmer was settled. The duty falls into new hands, some of whom were not born when the late pastor was ordained; but, by their pious parents, they had been brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

They had been taught, and they believed, that the preaching of the gospel truths was all-important for their spiritual prosperity; and hence, before all the bearers at the funeral of the late pastor had preached in their turn in his pulpit, the church and society are preparing to maintain the preached word among them. We find, therefore, that in just one month from the death of Mr. Palmer, or May 4, 1791, the parish chose a committee of three, as an addition to a committee of like number already chosen by the church, "to supply the pulpit for the future."

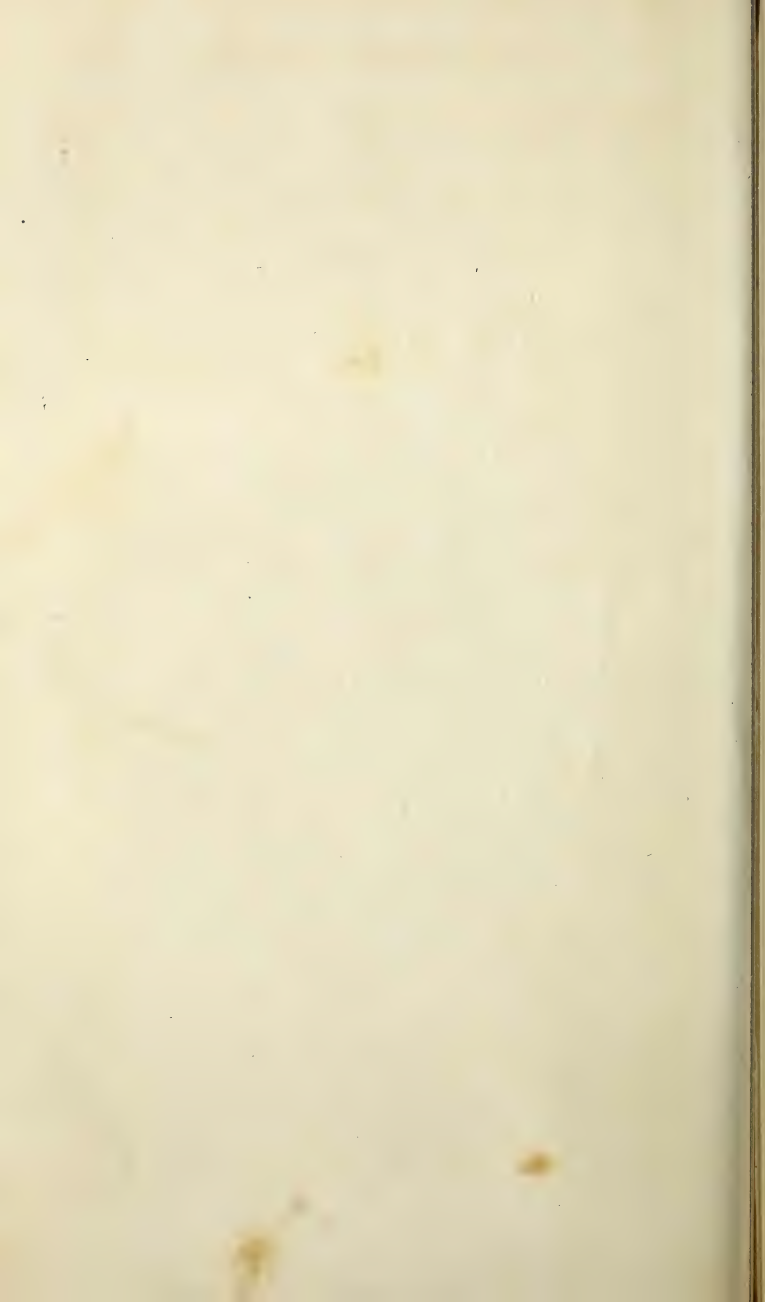
Some candidates preach,¹ but none are chosen, till

¹ The names of those who are known to have preached as candidates are a Mr. *Allen*; Mr. *Hooper*, supposed to have been Hezekiah, a native of Bridgewater, who graduated at Harvard, 1789, and was settled at Boylston. He died of consumption when twenty-six years old. In Davenport's History of Boylston, he is said to have been "a young man of good talents and attainments, a gentleman in his manners, and a pattern of meekness and humility." Mr. *Thomas*, supposed to have been Nehemiah, of Marshfield, who graduated at Harvard, 1789, and was settled at Scituate; a Mr. *Gray*, "an old man;" and *Stephen Palmer*, son of Rev. Joseph Palmer, of this town. (See graduates.)



Goodwin & Little

PITT CLARKE.



the 12th of October, 1792. On that day, the church, by a vote, "invite Mr. Pitt Clark to settle in this place, over this Church and congregation, in the work of the Gospel Ministry." Nov. 19, the parish concur with the church in extending the invitation, and "choose a committee of thirteen to take into consideration what to give Mr. Clark as a Settlement and Salary;" then adjourned to the 7th of January, 1793; then "voted to give Mr. Pitt Clark one hundred and fifty pounds, as an encouragement to settle with us in the Gospel Ministry as a settlement."¹ — "Voted to give said Mr. Clark 80 pounds salary Pr. year, so long as he remains our minister and supplies the pulpit."

There seems to have been some misunderstanding as to the meaning of this last vote. On the 25th of February following, the parish change it so as to read thus: "Voted to give Mr. Pitt Clark Eighty pounds as

¹ As a further encouragement for him to settle with them, a subscription-paper was drawn up April 1, 1793, and £79. 8s. was pledged "in addition to the Encouragement" above mentioned, "provided he settle as the minister of sd. Parish." As a matter of interest, we copy the names of the donors, with the sums given:—

	£	s.		£	s.
George Leonard	20	0	Benjamin Pearson	0	6
Daniel Dean	4	10	Eleazer Clapp	1	10
Joseph Hodges	1	10	Ephraim Lane, jun.	1	10
Silas Cobb	1	10	David Clapp	1	10
Jonathan Leonard	2	10	Daniel Parker	1	10
Ebenezer Titus	1	10	Isaac Basset	1	0
Daniel Knap	1	0	Isaac Stone	0	6
Samuel Morey	3	0	William Martin	0	6
Josiah Hodges	1	10	Jonathan Briggs	0	6
John Hall	4	10	Thomas Danforth	0	6
William Cobb	1	0	Daniel Lane	0	6
Ephraim Lane	1	10	Isaac Lane	0	6
Noah Wiswall	1	10	George Palmer	0	12
Seth Smith, jun.	2	0	Samuel Hunt	0	12
Ephraim Raymond	3	0	Stephen Jennings	3	0
Samuel Morey, jun.	1	10	Isaac Hodges, jun.	0	12
Joshua Pond	1	0	Abel Franklin	0	6
Elijah Cobb	1	0	Samuel Copeland	1	4
Elijah Danforth	0	12	John King	1	0
Thomas Braman	2	0	Brian Hall	0	12
William Lane	0	6	Michael Sweet	0	12
Elijah Lane	0	6	Laban Wheaton	1	0
Asa Copeland	1	10	Joseph Phillips	0	6
Laban Smith	0	6	Isaac Braman	1	10

a salary annually, as long as he shall continue with us in the work of the Gospel Ministry." This, however, did not satisfy all parties. Another meeting is called, and a committee chosen to consider the matter; and finally, March 25, 1793, the following vote of explanation is carried at a meeting of the parish:—

"That the true intent and meaning of the sd. parish is, that the sum of not less than 80 pounds be granted annually, and paid to the said Mr. Pitt Clark, as a salary for his support during the time, or so long as, he should be Resident and officiate in the work of the ministry in sd. parish, by preaching and performing other duties and services, agreeably to the form and Customs adopted and practised upon by ministers of the Congregational Churches and Parishes in this Commonwealth. Provided, nevertheless, that, if it shall be more agreeable to Mr. Clark, it is voted that this Parish will grant a salary to him of not less than eighty pounds for four years, and not less than 100 pounds annually, after that time, on the principles and limitations aforesaid."

This was, no doubt, satisfactory to Mr. Clarke; and, in a few weeks, his letter of acceptance of the call was received. It is in these words:—

"To the Congregation, Chh., & Parish in Norton.

"Having maturely considered your invitation and proposals to settle with you as a Gospel Minister, consulted my friends on the subject, and frequently addressed the throne of grace for special direction, I have determined to accept of your call, and to settle upon the last proposal and offer made by sd. Parish on the 25th of March last; viz., That sd. Parish pay me annually, as a salary, not less than eighty pounds per year for the four years immediately succeeding my ordination, and not less than one hundred pounds annually from the expiration of said four years, so long as I shall be resident and officiate in the work of the ministry in sd. Parish: expecting to be treated, in all respects, according to the general forms and customs adopted and practised upon by the ministers of the congregational chhs. and parishes in this commonwealth. Imploring the grace of God to assist me in the

faithful discharge of my duty, and thereby to promote ye glory of God and our spiritual improvement,

*Pitt Clarke*¹

"NORTON, April 27, 1793."

May 7, 1793, it was "voted that the ordination of Mr. Pitt Clark be on the first Wednesday of Sept. next;" and a "committee of five, to agree with some person to provide for and entertain the Council that shall be called to the ordination of Mr. Clark," was chosen. At an adjourned meeting, May 20, it was decided to have the ordination on the first Wednesday of July.

On the same day, Lieut. William Morey, Silas Cobb, and Lieut. Tisdale Hodges, were chosen a committee "to superintend the business of the ordination."

Letters-missive were sent to nineteen churches, inviting them to meet and form a council, and assist in the interesting services, — thirteen of which were present. According to previous arrangement, he was ordained July 3, 1793. The exercises were as follows: Rev. Jason Haven, of Dedham, made the first prayer; Rev. Thomas Prentiss, of Medfield, preached the sermon;² Rev. Jonas Clark, of Lexington, made the ordaining prayer; Rev. Jacob Cushing, of Waltham, gave the charge; Rev. Roland Green, of Mansfield, the right hand; and Rev. Abiel Holmes, of Cambridge, concluded with prayer; and the church-records, in the handwriting of Mr. Clarke, say, "The whole was conducted harmoniously. Decency and order were observed through a crowded assembly. Thus one generation passeth away, and another cometh."

¹ During the first years of his ministry, he wrote his name Clark; towards the close of life, he wrote it Clarke. We regard the "e" as superfluous; but we write his name as he chose to write it towards the close of life. The autograph we give was not the one attached to the letter above, but was written a few years before his death.

² This Sermon, and also the Charge and Right Hand of Fellowship, were published. The text was 1 Cor. ii. 2: "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

“ Few were the incidents which checkered, and fewer which marred, his long and faithful ministry. In the main (with one prominent exception), it seems to have been singularly happy and serene, and fraught with manifold sources of satisfaction to his virtuous bosom.”¹ Mr. Clarke was always very liberal in his religious opinions. The Christian spirit of toleration and respect for believers in a different faith from his own is traceable through his whole ministry. He wished not in any way to shackle the human mind; and the church, to some extent, soon caught the spirit that controlled their pastor. At a church-meeting held April 1, 1803, after the choice of two deacons, — one of whom was Deacon Lysander Makepeace, who has just passed on from earth, — “ the Church considered the propriety of requiring written relations from those who wished to be admitted, as has been the practice; and, considering them as an unscriptural bar, they voted unanimously to lay them aside, and to give encouragement, that every believer who gives the church satisfactory evidence of his belief, in any other way most agreeable, should be admitted.” In passing this vote, the church showed much wisdom and good sense. The latter part of the year 1805, the question came up, “ whether those who held to Baptist peculiarities shall be admitted into full communion and regular standing with this Church?” The matter was considered at several church-meetings; and finally, on the 31st of January, 1806, “ after freely discussing and duly weighing the project, they unanimously agreed in the following vote, and passed it without a dissenting voice: ” —

“ Whereas some persons have manifested a desire of joining our church, who hold to baptism by immersion and deny infant-baptism, — voted, that such persons, by giving evidence of their faith and sincerity, may be admitted into full communion, and to all the rights and privileges with us; provided,

¹ Rev. A. Bigelow's Funeral Sermon, p. 19.

nevertheless, they shall not vote in any matters against the Congregational platform and interest."

This is additional evidence that the spirit of Jesus possessed both pastor and church. It shows that they were liberally-minded, and willing to accept all who came clad in the livery of Christ, whatever might be their belief.

July 31, 1793, a few days after the settlement of Mr. Clarke, the original church-covenant was changed so as to read thus : —

" CHH.-COVENANT.

"You do now sincerely and very solemnly give up yourself to God, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and you receive him as your God and portion, designing to live unto him. You give up yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, thro' whom God is manifest in the flesh, and who is the great head of his chosen people; and you receive him, as made of God, unto you, wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. You likewise join yourself to this chh. of Chr.; engaging, in the communion hereof, by his help, to attend upon the ordinances of the Gospel, while your opportunities hereby to be edified in your most holy faith shall be continued to you. This you declare?

"We, then, the chh. of Christ in this place, receive you into our sacred fellowship, and promise, that, by God's assistance, we will treat you with such affection and watchfulness as your sacred relation to us now calls for. This we do, imploring of our Lord that both we and you may obtain mercy to be faithful in his covenant, and to glorify him in that holiness which becometh his house for ever. Amen."

This covenant was not recorded on the church-books, but was recently found, with the date affixed, among the papers and in the handwriting of Mr. Clarke; and I am assured that it is the one used during his ministry. To this the candidates assented when they were admitted to the church.

Below we give another, which is supposed to have been read to the candidate for admission to the church, and received his or her assent previous to being pro-

pounded for admission. It is believed to have gone into disuse soon after Mr. Clarke's settlement:—

“FOR THOSE WHO OWN THE COVENANT.

“You believe the word of God, contained in the Scriptures of the O. and N. T., to be the truth, with all the great points of doctrine contained in them, and professed by this chh.

“You take, avouch, and profess the Lord Jehovah to be your God; and promise, as God shall help you, to fear him, and seek him, and love him, and obey him, with your heart and soul and mind and strength. You take God the Father to be your Father, and give yourself (and yours) to him as your Father for ever, hoping for all fatherly mercies from him.

“You take the son of God, who is the Lord Jesus Christ, to be the Mediator of your peace, and your great high Priest, prophet, and king; and you rely on his grace, mediation, and sacrifice, obedience, intercession, and powerful influence, for your salvation. You take the Holy Ghost to be your great Influencer, sanctifier, and Comforter. You give up yourself and offspring to be regenerated, pardoned, restrained from sin, defended from temptation, rescued from evil, sanctified, supplied, comforted, and brought to Christ, by the power and mercy of the Lord your God.

“You submit yourself and yours to the care and watch, discipline and government, of this chh., and of Christ in his chh.; and faithfully promise to endeavor to abstain from all sin, to lead a Godly and virtuous life, to promote reformation, to walk in a conscientious and constant observance of all the ordinances of Chr. Jesus our Lord, — wereof you are at present capable, and hereafter as you shall be further qualified and capable; looking for the mercy of God in our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

During the latter part of Mr. Clarke's ministry, Mrs. Peddy Bowen,¹ daughter of Judge George Leonard, made a present of church-furniture to the church,

¹ She was the widow of the late Hon. Jabez Bowen, of Rhode Island; who, at one time, was Lieutenant-Governor of the State. She died at the paternal mansion-house in Norton, where she had resided for some years after the death of her husband, on the 13th of September, 1850, aged eighty-nine years, eleven months, and four days. She was a woman of rare beauty and accomplishments. (See further notice of her in *Genealogical Register*, vol. v. p. 101, &c.)

“consisting of 2 Flaggons, 6 cups, and 2 plates, — all of best quality silver plated; together with a durable basket to contain them, and rouge for keeping them clean and bright. prime cost, \$61.42.”

June 3, 1829, the church “voted to accept this present of Church-plate, to be consecrated to the service of the Communion; and also to present their united thanks to the worthy Donor, for her elegant and valuable donation.” A committee was also chosen for that purpose, who presented to Mrs. Bowen the following communication: —

“NORTON, June 3, 1829.

“DEAR MADAM, — We, the undersigned, have the honor to be a Committee from the chh. of Christ in Norton to express their sincere thanks for the elegant and valuable present of Church-Vessels you have presented; which they thankfully accept, and will consecrate to the sacred use of commemorating the dying love of our blessed Redeemer.

“May you, Madam, long live to partake of the elements which will be presented in these sacred vessels; and, when it shall please the Great Head of the church to call us home, may you share largely in that blessed eulogy, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.’

“We are, Madam, with consideration of great Respect,

“Your humble servants,

“P. CLARKE,
E. RAYMOND, } Committee.”

The most important event (already alluded to) which occurred during the ministry of Mr. Clarke was the division of his church and parish, and the formation of a new society. Probably the time has not come when an impartial history of *all* the causes that led to the separation can or should be written. Although Mr. Clarke acted the only part that an honest man could have acted under the circumstances, yet he felt grieved, not at his own conduct, but at the conduct of others, and especially at the treatment he received from those he had ever regarded as his friends. For many years before his death, he kept

a sort of diary, wherein he recorded some of the principal events that transpired, and expressed his feelings, at certain epochs in his life. In the last entry he ever made in his journal, and only a few weeks before his death, — and which may therefore be considered as his dying testimony, — in alluding to the events of the last two or three years, he says, —

“No part of my whole life has been so trying to my feelings as this portion of it. Before this period, I had lived in great harmony with my people for about 40 years; and they appeared as much united as any religious society of my acquaintance. But, unexpectedly, a rich and respectable family in my parish took an affront, and rose in hostile array against me. Soon after this hostility commenced, others, who styled themselves *Orthodox*, joined the opposition, and charged me with changing my sentiments, and not preaching the Gospel. I thought myself preaching the *same* Gospel I ever did, and felt more and more interested in preaching the true Gospel. The unexpected charge led me to examine more fully the ground of my faith; to search the scriptures more closely; and to declare more plainly, tho’ prudently, what I conceived to be the whole revealed counsel of God.”

As the result of his inquiries, he prepared a document, setting forth, in a lucid and forcible manner, his theological views, which he intended to present as a New-Year’s gift to his people; but his sudden sickness and demise prevented *him* from doing it. It was soon after given to the world under the title of a “Pastor’s Legacy to his People.” We have read it with mingled feelings of admiration and love.

The spirit of Jesus is traceable on every page. If his *head* was astray, his *heart* was certainly in the right place. Whether his head was wrong, it is not for the historian to say. We think, however, no one, who reads his legacy attentively, can rise from its perusal without having his heart touched with coals from off the altar of God; for those pages could have been penned under no other influence than that of the Holy Spirit. I have found, in his own handwriting, what purports to be the “Creed [of] Pitt Clarke,

1794," the year after his settlement. As he was accused of changing his opinions after he was settled, we will here introduce his "Creed of 1794" entire, and then make a few extracts from his "Legacy," and let the reader judge whether his views had essentially changed or not:—

"CREED.

"1st, I believe in one God, the Father of ye whole human race, — ye Lord, God, and Judge of ye world; in his universal and particular providence, that he is omniscient and omnipresent; perfectly holy, pure, gentle, good, and merciful; ye only object of worship; ye source of all our earthly blessings; ye Father of our immortal spirits; ye Author of our immortal hopes; and ye righteous judge of quick and dead.

"2nd, I believe in ye Lord Jesus Christ, ye only begotten son, whom ye Father hath sent into ye world to save mankind from sin and sorrow; in his ministry of love and benevolence; in ye divine authority of his mission and doctrines; in his miracles, which proved him to be ye son of God with power, and a messenger sent from heaven to reclaim and save sinners; in his perfect example; in his sufferings, &c., on ye cross; in his triumphant resurrection, and ascension into heaven, where he ever liveth.

"3rd, I believe in ye holy spirit; that it was shed forth abundantly on ye first disciples of our Saviour, imparting unto them all necessary wisdom and knowledge, and ye power of working miracles in ye first state.

"4th, In ye resurrection from ye dead, and in ye future judgment; In a state of just and equal retribution, according to ye deeds; In ye paternal character of God, and ye forgiveness of sins; that God is in himself merciful, and ready to forgive; that he has appointed, as a condition of salvation, repentance towards God; that of his own free grace, and according to his promises, he will pardon and accept ye penitent and reformed sinner, and render to ye impenitent indignation to every soul that continues to do evil. I believe in ye eternal and unalterable obligations of virtue; that this is ye first law of heaven, and that, without it, heaven cannot be enjoyed; that this is ye great object of revelation, ye chief duty and greatest glory of man; that nothing will be accepted in substitution for it; that it secures ye best happiness of [man] in this world; is ye only preparation for death, and our only

ground of hope in Christ, in ye favor of God and happiness of eternity."

We now quote a few extracts from his legacy :—

"In all human creeds, I find some good things, and some not supported in scripture. The good, I treasure up; the bad, throw away. I profess to be a follower of Christ; and glory in being called a Christian, as his followers were first called Christians at Antioch. I have the example of my Master and his immediate followers, not to assume any name but Christian,—not to call any one master but Christ. Our Saviour was not a sectarian or an exclusionist, in the modern sense of these terms.

"I believe that there is one only living and true God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. I believe God to be an infinite Spirit, spreading the emanations of his Being throughout the Universe; possessing every adorable attribute and perfection; the only proper object of supreme love, adoration, and praise.

"I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, and Saviour of the world; the brightness and the image of the invisible Jehovah; and that in him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and that, through him, we have access by one spirit unto the Father. Him hath God exalted to give repentance and remission of sin. By him we receive the atonement,—even reconciliation with God; for in him, through him, or by him, God is reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their tresspasses. I believe and baptise in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; in devout acknowledgement of God, the Father of all; of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and of the Holy Spirit, the inward comforter and support of his people. I believe in the necessity of a new birth, or a change of heart; for the natural birth gives no idea of God or of eternity. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and sees and enjoys only fleshly gratifications. Children, though born innocent, are destitute of holiness till they are capable of right affections. When the eyes of their mind are opened to see God and eternity, and the affections of their heart are placed on things above, then the new birth takes place; a new and spiritual world is opened to the view; the affections are raised from earthly to heavenly objects; and the whole man is brought into new and higher

relations. I believe that this change of heart consists in a change of affections from sensual to spiritual enjoyments; from sin to holiness; from things seen and temporal to things unseen and eternal.

“I believe that this happy change is to be brought about through the instrumentality of God’s word, blessed and sanctified by His holy spirit. I believe that this change is to be known by the fruits of it, which are good works. He who does righteousness is born of God. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, says Christ, if ye have love one to another; for love is the best evidence of a good heart. Genuine conversions make better hearts, tempers, and lives; better parents, children, neighbors, and citizens. Such conversions cause their subjects to become more upright, humble, and peaceable; more charitable towards those who differ in opinion; more willing to co-operate with all good people in promoting practical piety. I believe that sudden conversions are not so much to be relied on as those more gradual, which have been brought about by deliberate reflection and consideration; for the subjects of sudden conversions may not know what spirit they are of, till they have time to try the spirits whether they be of God. The fruits of a good spirit are love, joy, peace, gentleness, humility, meekness, goodness, faith, hope, temperance, &c.; the greatest of all, charity. I believe that there are some good people in all denominations of Christians; and that, at the last day, a great multitude, which no man can number, — of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, — will stand before the throne of God, clothed with white robes, and palms of victory in their hands. I believe that the final judgment will be in perfect accordance with this grand principal of the Gospel, — that God is no respecter of persons; but that, in every nation, he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, will be accepted of Him. I am willing to be judged by the Bible; for I make this sacred volume the sole rule of my faith, preaching, and practice. By this standard we must all be judged in the great day of accounts; and we must receive according to the sentence which it shall then give.”

In his diary he goes on to say, —

“But my keeping closely to the doctrines revealed did not satisfy the leaders of the opposition. They chose to

separate, and form themselves into a new society. Five male members of my chh., and six females, asked a dismission; and, tho' the chh. did not grant it, they formed themselves into another chh., and attended public worship with a new society which they and others organized. This drew me into a critical situation, and very much increased my trials and burdens. But, under all these trials, I endeavored to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and man. Having this witness, I can go down the hill of life with satisfaction, and fear not to meet my opposers at the bar of my Maker. Were they now perfectly acquainted with my motives of action towards them, and my earnest desire to promote the cause of righteousness and truth, I am sure they would acquit me of any designed fault. My heart's desire and prayer to God is, that they may all come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved. The days of my years teach me that the solemn test of my character is near at hand; that eternity is at my door; that there is but a step between me and death."

And that step was shorter even than he expected. Though then apparently hale and hearty for a man of his years, yet, in about six weeks, all that was mortal of him was consigned to the tomb. He was "born of the spirit," Feb. 13, 1835, at the age of threescore and twelve years, after a ministry of forty-one years, seven months, and ten days.

On Sunday, Feb. 15, the funeral services took place at the meeting-house, where, for so many years, he had ministered at the altar of God. The sermon was preached by Rev. Andrew Bigelow, of Taunton; which was printed, together with some extracts from the diary of the deceased. Dr. Bigelow, who was with him in his last sickness, in his "Funeral Sermon," p. 15, says, —

"Never have I beheld a death-bed scene more sublimely edifying — more Christianly serene, sustained, and consoling — than that of the aged servant of Christ who sleeps in death before us. Truly his latter end was PEACE. He knew in whom he believed, and 'endured as seeing Him who is invisible.' The Being whom he served shed down into his soul the gladsome tokens of his presence. Supports he experienced which the world could not give; which flesh and

sense were incapable of administering; but which death itself could not take away. 'My heart is fixed,' he exultingly exclaimed, 'my heart is fixed,—trusting, O Lord! in thee. I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.' And he sunk from life, to rest in peace and sleep in the 'blessed hope.'"

It is pleasant to linger in the atmosphere of so Christian a man. With much reluctance does our pen cease to do homage to his virtue, his unaffected, Christ-like character. We can well understand why his name is so fondly cherished and revered by those whose enviable privilege it was to partake of the heavenly manna that fell from his lips. It remains for us, in this chapter, to say that the number of admissions into the church during his ministry was one hundred and fifty-four: the number of children baptized was two hundred and eighty-four.¹

CHAPTER XIV.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND OBITUARY NOTICES OF REV. PITT CLARKE.

"I venerate the man whose heart is warm;
Whose hands are pure; whose doctrines and whose life,
Coincident, exhibit lucid proof
That he is honest in the sacred cause." — COWPER.

WE shall in this chapter introduce the autobiography of Mr. Clarke, written about three years before his

¹ During his lifetime, several of his sermons were printed. Among his publications, we will name a Thanksgiving Sermon, preached in 1795; a Sermon at the ordination of Sylvester F. Bucklin at Marlborough, Nov. 2, 1808; a Discourse before the Norton Female Christian Association, June 3, 1818; a Sermon at Mansfield, on the Sunday following the interment of Mr. Ebenezer Warren, who died Jan. 1, 1824; a Sermon on the formation of a new heart, printed in L. C. Bowles's Monthly Publications of Sermons, May, 1830; a Sermon in Exposition of John i. 1, in 1832; and the Right Hand of Fellowship at the ordination of Rev. Mr. Pipon at Taunton, in 1800.

death; also some obituary notices of him, &c.; which will serve to illustrate his character, and show the estimation in which he was held by the community where he was best known.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

“I was born in Medfield, Jan. 15, 1763.¹ My father’s name was Jacob. He had nothing to recommend him beyond the reputation of being an honest man, an industrious farmer, and practical Christian. He was one of three brothers, whose grandfather came from England, and settled in the north of Wrentham, which was then comparatively a wilderness. My grandfather came to Medfield, and purchased a farm in the south part of that town by his own industry.

“He had three sons and three daughters. He gave his sons the names of Nathan, Jacob, and David, from a kind of veneration for those scriptural characters. They all bore the name of being honest, industrious, and devout. There ever appeared to me to be a perfect harmony and endearing intercourse between them. My mother’s name was originally Meletiah Hammant; which, rightly spelt, is Hammond. Her predecessors bore the same reputation with my father’s. She was my father’s second wife.

“My mother was of a different texture from my father. He was naturally cheerful and social. She was of a feeble, gloomy, nervous make, and pious almost to superstition. At times, she was so fearful of not living up to that profession of religion which she early made, as to sink almost into despair. This was owing to a great diffidence of herself, united with her nervous affections. She was not only pious in mind, but devout in practice.

“She always set a good example before her children, who were three sons and four daughters. She instilled into their minds, when very young, the first principles of religion; and expressed the greatest concern in giving them pious feelings. I feel much indebted to my parents for my early dedication to God in baptism, and my early habits of attention to religious institutions. Especially I feel many obligations to my mother for the many early religious impressions I received from her

¹ On his gravestone, it is stated that he was born Jan. 5. This is doubtless an error; for, in his diary, he always speaks of Jan. 15 as his birthday.

pious example. I often witnessed, when a small child, her secret prayers; and, when unobserved by her, would sink [down] in the spirit of mental and private devotion. This led me into early habits of calling upon God, morning and evening; and of committing to memory a variety of prayers to assist my devotions. This habit of secret prayer never entirely forsook me; tho', I acknowledge with shame, I have not always practised it so constantly and fervently as I ought.

"My grandfather had an exalted opinion of the great Pitt in his mother country, on account of his distinguished pleas for American liberty. Out of regard to this eloquent friend of America, my grandfather would tell me he gave me my name, and flatter me with the idea of going to college. How far this operated to raise my ambition for study, when a child, I cannot say. I early felt a desire to learn, and was ambitious to excel my classmates. When very young, my master told me I must study the Latin, and go to college. I obtained the consent of my father to begin the first book in Latin when between ten and eleven years old. But I did not continue the study of the language longer than the town-school continued. This was owing to two causes. One was the deranged state of the academies and colleges, on account of the Revolutionary war: the other was the embarrassed condition of my father. In the first of the Revolution, Boston was besieged, and the college entirely broken up. Then there was not the least encouragement of obtaining a public education. I gave up my studies, went to work on the farm at home, and occasionally abroad on wages; laying aside what I could against a time of need for an education. When old enough to be enrolled in the Militia Bill, I was called to go as a soldier on a sudden expedition to Rhode Island. The British had taken possession of the island, and were directing their devastations towards Massachusetts. The alarm came, and the militia were called upon to meet their attacks, and drive them from the island. In this expedition, I was every day expecting to meet the enemy in the hottest battle; but, just before it came to our turn to fight, the British were driven from their stronghold, and evacuated the island. I returned home to my father's farm. As soon as the war terminated, and the college was restored to its regular state, I again entertained the hope of resuming my studies. But another circumstance occurred to disappoint me. My father's house unfortunately took fire, and was consumed, together

with nearly all the furniture and fall provisions. It was in November, 1779.

"All the little that I had laid aside was destroyed. I felt myself stript and naked. But from the calamity I learned some of the best lessons. My father, however, was thrown into such immediate embarrassment, that I dismissed all thoughts of pursuing my studies, and was under the necessity of returning to hard labor for a few years. When I arrived at the age of twenty-one, and felt the liberty of acting for myself, I resumed the courage of setting out for an education. I had procured a little to begin with by working at common wages, which my father gave me: and he promised to assist me some more, if he should be able; tho' it could be but little. I studied partly at home, and partly with Miss Hannah Adams, who lived near by, and to whom I recited my lessons. Under her tuition principally, I fitted for college, and was admitted into Cambridge University about a year after I commenced my studies, — July 22, 1786.

"I had the good fortune of being a member of a large and respectable class, many of whom were of the first talent, and much the greater part of good characters. Another circumstance was much in my favor. The most distinguished scholars in my class were, like myself, in limited circumstances, and the most popular. On this account, the best part of the class set the example of prudence in expenses; and there was no disparagement in it. By receiving help from the charitable funds, and teaching schools, I made my way thro' college without much assistance from my father. I received the honors of the University, July 21, 1790.

"Being in debt for my college expenses, I engaged the town-school in Cambridge, and continued in it two years; at the same time, pursuing my theological studies. These studies had been my predilection before I entered college, and were a leading object of attention through my college-life. Before I left the school, I was examined by the Cambridge Association of Ministers, and approbated to preach April 17, 1792. I preached occasionally in neighboring towns while I continued in the school; and, before I closed it, received an application to supply the vacant parish in Norton. I commenced preaching in this place as soon as I left the school, — the following August. It was the first place of my preaching on probation.

"Having preached here only four sabbaths, the church in Norton gave me an invitation to settle among them as their

gospel minister. The invitation was so sudden and unexpected, that I at first felt ready to reject it. It being, however, of such a serious nature, I took it into consideration; and consented to supply the pulpit myself, or by proxy, till I gave my answer. I found the people much divided. They had heard many candidates, and could not unite on any one. The opposition to me, at first, was formidable. I could not satisfy the minds of those called orthodox. On this account, the society postponed their meeting, to concur with the church, for several months, on condition I would continue to preach with them longer. It being winter, and bad moving about, I consented to tarry with them till spring. This gave us an opportunity to become acquainted with each other: and, upon this farther acquaintance, the opposition in a great measure subsided; and there was nearly a unanimous invitation from church and society for me to become their pastor.¹ The union was so great, I could not feel it my duty to give a negative answer; altho' the pecuniary encouragement appeared too small. I was ordained July 3, 1793, — a solemn day to me. My deepest impression was, that I was insufficient for these things. I felt the force of that passage, 1 Kings iii. 7, 'I know not how to go out or come in before the people.' This was the subject of my first discourse after ordination.

“ Having been ordained about two years, I found the currency so much depreciated, that my salary was inadequate to my support. This was intimated to individuals, who circulated the report, that I could not continue with them much longer, unless some more pecuniary encouragement should be given. In consequence of this alarm, a universal disposition was shown to afford me voluntary assistance. From this encouragement I purchased a building spot, and about twenty acres of land entirely uncleared and unfenced. By the assistance of my parishioners, part of it was cleared up, and a house built, tho' unfinished.² On Feb. 1, 1798, I was married to Rebecca Jones, the youngest daughter of John Jones,

¹ This was not probably formally, but rather informally, expressed; for I can find no allusion to any invitation to settle, after the one given Oct. 12, 1792, by the church, and concurred in by the parish on the 19th of November following, as mentioned in a preceding chapter.

² From memoranda which he kept in Larkin's Pocket Register and Almanack for 1796, it appears that he “made a purchase of some land for a settlement,” on the 6th of September of that year; and, in the “P.M., 34 persons came to clear it up.” Sept. 22, “32 of my parishioners voluntarily

Esq., of Hopkinton. . . . After a long and distressing pulmonary consumption, she died March 2, 1811. She continued in the full exercise of her strong mental powers to the very last moment of life. I was married the second time, Nov. 12, 1812 [to Mary Jones Stimson]. She was the daughter of Doctor Jeremy Stimson [of Hopkinton], who married an elder sister of my former wife."¹

This autobiography was written in 1832, under the date of Jan. 15, — the day he entered upon his seventieth year. Mr. Clarke gives the following as the reason for writing it:—

“As I have arrived so near threescore years and ten,—the common age of man fixed by my Maker,—I am moved

worked on my land to prepare it for ploughing.” Sept. 29, it appears that twenty-two persons, with twenty-four cattle, were engaged in “ploughing part of what they had before cleared,” and in “digging stone.” Oct. 6, “26 oxen and 11 hands ploughing, and drawing stone.” Oct. 12, “40 oxen and 18 hands” at work; “only two yoke and three hands at my expense.” Oct. 17, “13 men, with 30 oxen, ploughed again for me, and harrowed in two acres of rye.” Nov. 8, “4 of my parish laid up wall for me, and two cut up brush.” Nov. 10, “commenced the digging of my well.” Dec. 16, “A number of hands cut down a greater part of ye timber for my house, and brought some of it to a place for building.” Dec. 24, “Concluded ye digging of my well.” Dec. 22, “moved to Judge Leonard’s.” In December of 1796, Mr. Clarke bought more land, bordering upon what he purchased in September; for which he paid \$627.50. His house was built about a fourth of a mile from the meeting-house, on the Mansfield road, during the year 1797. It is now owned by Nathaniel Freeman. The amount he received in 1796, “from individuals, towards clearing up land, plowing, &c.,” was \$131.82. In 1797, it appears that he received, “in materials for building, labor, team-work, provisions, &c.,” \$255.61; and, in nine subsequent years, he received, “in provisions, labor, wood, &c.,” \$196.37. I am told, that, at one time during the ministry of Mr. Clarke, Judge Leonard agreed to give him as much wood as the people of his parish would cut and draw in one day. The people entered into the matter with great earnestness; and, as soon as the day dawned, Mr. Leonard’s wood-lot was filled with men and teams; and, before night, wood enough was drawn to Mr. Clarke’s door to last him some three or four years. Mr. Clarke, after purchasing his farm, and up to the time of his death, labored personally upon it with untiring diligence (thus keeping his health good and his constitution vigorous); and, by his industry and frugality, saved quite a little property for a country minister. It was valued, at his death, at \$10,000. During his whole ministry, he was seldom absent from his pulpit on Sunday from any cause. He was also very punctual in the fulfilment of any engagements,—never being behind the appointed hour.

¹ By his first wife, Mr. Clarke had five children: viz., *Abigail Morton*, now the wife of J. J. Stimson, Esq., of Providence, R.I.; *William Pitt*, who resides at Ashland; *John Jones*, who resides at Roxbury; *Caroline*, who died in infancy; *George Leonard*, who died in infancy. By his second wife, he had four: viz., *George Leonard*, who resides at Providence, R.I.; *Harriet*, who died, aged one day; *Manlius Stimson*, who resided in Boston, where he died a few years since; *Edward Hammond*, who resides at Boston.

to leave behind me a short memoir of my life. I dare not neglect it any longer, for fear of death,—I am so near the boundary of human existence. I am not led to do this from the impression that any thing in my life will be worthy of notice, but from a desire to bequeathe to my children a brief memorial of their humble origin.”

It would be an excellent idea for all parents to leave a similar legacy to their children. What child would not prize such an AUTOBIOGRAPHY of a father?

We will now introduce extracts from one or two obituary notices published soon after his death:—

“He has, besides his faithful labors as a minister of the gospel, fitted many young men for college; and had the charge and instruction of a number of students of the University, who have at different times been suspended from that institution, and directed to pursue their studies under his care. Mr. Clarke was remarkable for his habits of industry and order. He was uniformly an early riser; and thus accomplished much which many others leave undone, or but poorly performed. He was greatly respected for his sound judgment and wise counsel in all affairs of importance, and particularly in such as related to ecclesiastical affairs, and to the interests of literature, morals, and religion. His whole character as a minister was not only entirely without reproach, but in all respects most exemplary. His preaching was always serious, impressive, and evangelical. It is worthy of remark, that though there were, from the beginning of his ministry, some of his parishioners who did not fully approve of his doctrinal views, yet by the seriousness and earnestness of his ministrations, together with his attentive, affectionate, and truly Christian deportment as a minister, he commanded their esteem and confidence, and preserved uniform harmony among his people till near the close of his ministry; when the spirit of division, so generally prevalent through the country, seizing on some unfortunate local occurrences (but in no respect touching his character as a man or a minister), caused a schism in his parish, such as had before taken place in almost all of the parishes in the Commonwealth. The large body of his people, however, remained with him, and rallied the more earnestly around him. By witnessing the meek and truly Christian temper with which he endured the trial, and his untiring activity and zeal in the

discharge of all his duties, they felt the obligation to give renewed tokens of their attachment and confidence. Among these, one of great importance, and which was in a high degree gratifying to him, was the preparations that were in forwardness at the time of his decease for the erection of a new and more commodious place of worship.

"Mr. Clarke's last illness, which was a lung fever, was of short duration. But one Sunday intervened between his last public ministrations and the day of his burial.

"He retained his faculties to the last, and was fully aware of his approaching end. Though he had much to attach him to life, he was still resigned, calm, and happy in the view of his approaching death.

"The principles of the religion he preached, and so fully exemplified in his life, sustained him, and filled him with joyful hope in the hour of death."¹

"This excellent man, whose loss will be long and sincerely mourned, continued in the active discharge of his pastoral duties till the week previous to his decease. He preached to his congregation on the first sabbath of the present month; and officiated, on the day following, at the interment of a parishioner. In the evening subsequently, he was seized with the symptoms of his fatal malady. His illness he bore with exemplary fortitude. He early foresaw its inevitable issue, yet calmly resigned himself to the will of his Maker. Relying upon the promises of the gospel, his hope of immortality was bright.

"Having lived the life of the righteous, his 'latter end' was peace. The usefulness of this good man was felt and appreciated beyond the bounds of his parish. He has left a large circle of friends, who loved and honored him while living, and who will embalm in fond remembrance the many estimable traits of his character and life."²

"He was tenderly interested in the welfare of the young. The cause of education could not fail to be an object dear to his heart. At the time of his demise, he was enrolled with various associations, — literary and philanthropic, as well as religious, — in several of which he was a prominent officer, and in all of them a diligent and valued co-adjutor.

¹ Christian Register of Feb. 21, 1835.

² Taunton Whig and Reporter of Feb. 18, 1835.

“As Vice-President of the County Bible Society, he lent it an efficient and cordial support. Filling the same relation to the Board of Trustees at Bristol Academy, — at whose deliberations he oftentimes assisted, — he contributed essentially to the prosperity of the institution, and anxiously watched the progress and improvement of the minds and morals of its pupils. In ecclesiastical councils, at which he frequently presided, his opinions were regarded with uncommon deference, as the counsels of a sound, sage, candid, and discriminating mind.”¹

Here we must take leave of him who was —

“Bound to no sect, to no one party tied;
To sons of God in every clime allied.”

CHAPTER XV.

RECENT MINISTRY OF THE CONGREGATIONAL PARISH.

“For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight:
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.”

POPE.

By the death of Mr. Clarke, the pulpit, for the third time in more than a hundred and twenty years, is made vacant; and the maintenance of the Christian ministry and ordinances becomes a question of anxious solicitude to the parish. At the annual meeting, March 30, 1835, — a little more than a month after the death of their late revered pastor, — the society voted that the Standing Committee should supply the pulpit. From receipts and other papers in my possession, it appears that A. Davis preached two Sundays; Daniel C. Sanders, three; Nathaniel Whitman, four; Mr. Lakeman, two; and Mr. Richardson, one, — up to the close of the following July.

¹ Dr. Bigelow's Funeral Sermon.

On the 2d of August, 1835, Asarelah Morse Bridge commenced preaching as a candidate. His services were acceptable to the congregation; and, on the 28th¹ of December following, he was unanimously invited by the society "to settle with them as their Pastor in the Gospel Ministry," and a yearly salary of five hundred dollars was voted to him; and, when either party wished to dissolve the connection, three months' notice was to be given.

A committee of three was chosen to inform Mr. Bridge of the doings of the parish. They performed their duty; and he forthwith returned the following answer:—

"NORTON, Dec. 28th, 1835.

"To Dr. Richard F. Sweet, Dea. Stillman Smith, Mr. Thomas Braman, Committee of the Congregational Parish in Norton.

"GENTLEMEN,— I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from you, containing an invitation extended to me, by the society of which you are a committee, to become their Pastor and Teacher. It is highly gratifying to me that I have been chosen to fill so high and responsible a situation. The unanimity with which this invitation has been given increases my satisfaction. I accept it on the terms specified in your letter. I hope that nothing may occur which shall darken, in the least degree, the pleasing prospect which is before us.

"I remain yours respectfully,

"ASARELAH M. BRIDGE."

The parish then "voted to have the ordination of Rev. Mr. Bridge in four or five weeks from this date;" and the Standing Committee were appointed a "Committee of arrangement at the ordination."

The services of ordination took place Jan. 27, 1836. Sixteen churches were invited to form a council by

¹ It appears that Mr. Bridge had not supplied the pulpit all the time from Aug. 2 to the date above. C. P. Cranch preached two Sundays in October; George A. Williams, four, up to Nov. 8; and Mr. Buckingham and Mr. Stone, one each, the fore part of December,—probably not as candidates.

their pastors and delegates. The following was the order of services:—

Introductory Prayer by Rev. G. W. Briggs, of Fall River; Reading of Scriptures by Rev. J. D. Sweet, of Kingston; Sermon by Rev. George Putnam, of Roxbury,—text, Jer. iii. 15; Ordaining Prayer by Rev. F. Parkman, D.D., of Boston; Right Hand by Rev. H. G. O. Phipps, of Cohasset; Charge by Rev. A. Harding, of New Salem; Address to Society by Rev. B. Huntoon, of Milton; Concluding Prayer by Rev. R. Stone, of West Bridgewater.

During his ministry, Mr. Bridge labored earnestly and faithfully in the work to which he had devoted himself. Probably, on entering upon his pastoral duties, Mr. Bridge could not find the church-covenant (there being no copy of it on the church-records); and therefore he prepared, and the church (Feb. 5, 1836) accepted, the following—

“DECLARATION OF FAITH.

“You do solemnly declare your belief in the Being, Perfections, and Government of God; your faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world; and your acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as the word of God, and a perfect rule of faith and obedience.

“You express your desire thankfully to receive salvation in the way prescribed in the gospel; humbly resolving, by the help of divine grace, to live in obedience to his holy commandments, and to look for the mercy of God unto eternal life.

“You promise to walk with this church, while you have opportunity, in the regular observance of Christian ordinances, in the exercise of Christian affection, and in a submission to the regulations of the Church.

“You are now a member of this church. We have received you; we trust God has received you.

“We engage, and are bound, to pray for you; and, as we have opportunity, to watch over you, and, if need be, to admonish you. We expect the same kind offices from you; in the mutual discharge of which, may we all be built up in the faith and practice of our holy religion, and become prepared for admission hereafter into the Church of the Redeemer in Heaven! Amen.”

At a meeting of the parish, Aug. 31, 1840, it was voted, that their connection between Mr. Bridge, "as Pastor and People," be, by mutual consent of parties, dissolved after the first day of November next. And accordingly, on Nov. 1, 1840, Mr. Bridge preached his valedictory sermon, and retired from the office of pastor.

At a meeting of the church, Sept. 30, 1842, it was —

"Resolved, That we have full confidence in the Rev. A. M. Bridge as a pious, faithful, and devoted Christian minister; and that we cordially recommend him as such to those with whom he may be called to labor."

Rev. Mr. Bridge was the son of Josiah and Eirene Bridge; and was born in Lancaster, Mass., Jan. 21, 1810. His early education was acquired in the common schools of that town and at the Lancaster Academy. At the age of fourteen, he entered a store in Boston, where he remained six years. He then studied two years and a half at the New-Salem Academy; teaching school one winter at Hubbardston, and another at Petersham. In 1832, he entered the Divinity School at Cambridge; and graduated from that institution, July, 1835, a few days previous to his preaching his first sermon in Norton.

Since leaving Norton, he has been settled as pastor at Standish, Me., and Bernardston, Mass. For several years past, he has been the minister at Hampton Falls, N.H.

He married, July 31, 1838, Miss Martha S. Harding, daughter of Rev. A. Harding, of New Salem; by whom he had one child, — Frederick Harding, born at Norton, Sept. 1, 1839. His wife died at her father's house, May, 1841. She was a woman of very superior attainments.

He married, June 4, 1844, for second wife, Mary Ann Fullam, of Boston; and, by her, has had three children.

On Sunday, Nov. 8, 1840, — just one week from the time Mr. Bridge preached his farewell sermon, — Mr.

William Phillips Tilden occupied the pulpit. After preaching four Sundays, he was engaged to supply till the 1st of April following. Before the expiration of this engagement, or on March 15, 1840, the parish, by a vote of fifty-nine yeas to two nays, invited him "to settle with them in the Gospel Ministry, if the salary can be made satisfactory;" and chose Leonard Hodges, jun., Jarvis Smith, Earl Hodges, Stillman Smith, and Almond Tucker, a committee to report the doings of the parish to the candidate.

His salary was fixed at six hundred dollars per year, and the time of his settlement limited to two years; three months' notice to be given if either party wished to dissolve the connection sooner. Mr. Tilden accepted the call in the following note:—

" MARCH 15th, 1841.

"To the Congregational Parish in Norton.

"I have received by your committee a copy of the vote passed at your meeting, inviting me to become your Pastor.

"Would that I were more worthy of the confidence you have seen fit to repose in me! I have had, as you are all doubtless aware, but little experience in my profession. I could not, therefore, think for a moment of being settled as a minister to the spiritual wants of any people where I could not depend upon their sympathy and co-operation. But you have given me the assurance, by the unanimity with which you have given me the call, that I shall find here hearts that will sympathize with me in my labors, and be ready to make all reasonable allowance for my want of experience.

"Trusting, therefore, that I shall find in each of you a brother's heart, and that you will receive my imperfect services with that feeling of charity which covereth a multitude of faults, I accept of the invitation you have given me to become your Pastor, upon the condition named in the note which I have received.

"Yours in brotherly Love,

"WILLIAM P. TILDEN."

The Standing Committee of the parish were authorized "to make the necessary preparations for the ordination." It was decided that the ordination should

take place Wednesday, April 14; and thirteen churches were invited to meet in council, and assist in the services. But, a violent snow-storm occurring on that day, none of the council appeared; and, consequently, the services were postponed *one* week. April 21, 1841, the council met at the house of Earl Hodges. After organization, &c., it was "voted, that the Council are satisfied with the proceedings of the Society and the Pastor elect, and are ready to proceed to his ordination at 11 O'clock, A.M."

The order of exercises was as follows:—

Introductory Prayer by Rev. J. D. Sweet, of Kingston; Reading of the Scriptures by Rev. M. Allen, of Pembroke; Sermon by Rev. S. J. May, of South Scituate; Ordaining Prayer by Rev. A. Bigelow, of Taunton; Charge by Rev. E. Q. Sewall, of Scituate; Right Hand by Rev. J. L. Stone, of Mansfield; Address to the People by Rev. R. Stone, of West Bridgewater; Closing Prayer by Rev. A. Gushee, of Dighton.

The ministry of Mr. Tilden proved so acceptable to the parish, that, just before the close of the two years for which he was settled,—viz., March 13, 1843,—it was "voted unanimously to request the Rev. William P. Tilden to continue with said Parish in the ministry;" the conditions being the same as before. A committee of three was chosen to inform the pastor of the doings of the parish. The committee attended to the duty assigned them, and soon returned with the following answer:—

"To the First Congregational Church and Society in Norton.

"I have received, by the hands of your Committee, a copy of the vote you have this day passed, by which you have unanimously invited me to continue with you as your pastor. I feel deeply grateful to you for this fresh proof of your kind regards for me, and shall accept of your invitation; hoping and praying that our union, so long as it continues, may be blessed to the upbuilding of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

"Yours in the bonds of the Gospel,

"WILLIAM P. TILDEN.

"NORTON, March 13th, 1843."

After continuing with them a little more than a year from the date of the above note, Mr. Tilden signified to the parish his desire to be dismissed from his pastoral relations, on account of failing health. The parish met to consider the matter on the 15th of June, 1844, and voted that they "are desirous of retaining Rev. Mr. Tilden (in case he does now wish to be retained) as their minister, upon the same conditions that he was first settled;" and appointed a committee of three to confer with him relative to remaining. At an adjourned meeting, June 22, the committee received his answer. We here record it:—

"To the Congregational So. in Norton.

"DEAR FRIENDS, — The Com. chosen by you at your last meeting, for the purpose of conferring with me in relation to my still remaining with you as your Pastor, have attended to their duties. Truly grateful am I for the very kind wish, which, through that Com., you have expressed, that I should still sustain to you the relation of Pastor. It rejoices my heart to know, that, after spending near four years among you as your minister, you still deem me worthy of confidence, and regard me with unfeigned *kindness* and *good-will*. Be assured, the kind feeling is most cordially reciprocated.

"But as I have decided that it will be best for me to leave this field of labor, at least for one year, I still think that it will be better for you and for myself that the connection should be dissolved.

"I have not come to this decision without a struggle; for my heart still clings with sincere affection to the many tried friends whose sympathy and aid have cheered me on in my work among you: and my sincere and earnest prayer for you is, that you may be blessed with the services of one who shall break to you the 'True and *living bread*,' and help you onward in the divine life.

"Yours in Gospel Love,

"WILLIAM P. TILDEN."

The parish then voted to accept the answer: and, accordingly, the connection was dissolved; and the pastor preached his farewell sermon, June 30, 1844.¹

¹ A portion of it was printed in the Christian World, Aug. 24, 1844.

Rev. William P. Tilden was the son of Luther and Philenda (Brooks) Tilden; and was born in Scituate, May 9, 1811. He received most of his education in the common schools of his native State, having received only "*one term* of academical instruction." After leaving school, he spent his summers in the mackerel-fishery, and his winters in learning the trade of a carpenter; so that, without any figure of speech, it can be truly said, that he had an *evangelical* preparation for the ministry. His theological studies were pursued with Rev. Samuel J. May, of South Scituate.

May 15, 1834, he married, at Scituate, Miss Mary J. Foster; and has had four children. While residing in Norton, one of them "became an angel," Sept. 9, 1841.¹

Since leaving Norton, Mr. Tilden has been settled as pastor of the Unitarian societies of Concord and Walpole, N.H.; and is now the minister of the First Congregational Church in Fitchburg, Mass.

The pulpit made vacant by the resignation of Mr. Tilden was supplied a few Sundays by Rev. William H. Fish: and, on the 3d of August, a parish-meeting was held to see about hiring him for six months; but it was dissolved, without taking any action relative to the supply of the pulpit.

Who preached from that time to Nov. 17, we are not informed: but, on that day, Rev. William C. Tenney commenced a stated supply of the pulpit; and continued to do so till April 27, 1845. Rev. T. H. Dorr preached during the month of May; and Rev. A. D. Jones, during the month of June.

Rev. Amory Gale, M.D., commenced supplying the pulpit, July 6, 1845: and, with the exception of the month of August,—when the desk was occupied by clergymen from the "Hopedale Community" in Milford,—he preached regularly till the 1st of January,

¹ In the easterly part of the "Common" Graveyard, surrounded by a small circular wooden fence, may be seen a diminutive monument of white marble, with the inscription, "LITTLE JOSEPH." It marks the grave of "this dear boy."

1848; and supplied a few Sundays after that date. Nov. 29, 1845, by a vote of fifteen to ten, he was invited to settle; but, on account of the small majority by which the vote was carried, it was reconsidered. At an adjourned meeting, two weeks later, the Standing Committee were instructed to hire Mr. Gale for one year. Before the expiration of this engagement, he was re-engaged for another year; which term of service expired, as we have already stated, at the commencement of the year 1848.

During his ministry, the church-covenant was again revised. By a unanimous vote of the church, April 2, 1846, they adopted the following¹ —

“COVENANT.

“You acknowledge your Faith in One only wise and true God, who is the God and Father of all men; you believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, the Redeemer and Savior; and you regard the Holy Spirit as your Enlightener, your Sanctifier, your Comforter.

“You accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the only infallible rule of life; and you propose, by the help of Divine Grace, to regulate your conduct by its spirit and precepts; to observe its rites and ordinances; and to live in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bonds of peace with your brethren. *This* you acknowledge?

“We, then,—the Church of Christ in this place,—do receive and welcome you into our sacred fellowship and communion; promising that we will regard and treat you with that Christian tenderness and affection which your relation to us, as a member of Christ’s Church, requires.

“May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you with all spiritual blessings in His Son; may your days on earth be useful and happy; and may we all be finally admitted into glorious mansions on High, to participate in the joys of the Just made perfect through Faith!”

¹ The Declaration of Faith adopted during the ministry of Mr. Bridge was not recorded on the church-books; and Mr. Gale, not finding a copy, probably prepared this covenant, to use in the absence of any other: and it is the first covenant entered in due form upon the records since the organization of the church in 1714.

Also, during his ministry, Mr. Gale performed the laborious work of copying all the church-records on the old book into a new one. The faithfulness with which he performed the task was well worthy of the preamble and resolution we here record : —

“Whereas the Rev. Amory Gale has this day presented to the Church connected with the Congregational Parish in Norton a durable book for the records of said Church ; and has, with much labor, copied the doings and records of said Church from their old book [which was much obliterated] for the last one hundred and thirty years, and from its commencement, into the same ; and whereas said Church are desirous, as a body, of expressing their acknowledgments, not only for the book, but also for the labor bestowed thereon : —

“*Therefore resolved*, That the thanks of this church be presented to the Rev. Dr. Gale for the handsome and durable book of Records ; and also for the neat and chaste manner in which he has copied the Records from their old Church-book.

“NORTON, April 2d, 1848.

“Per order of the Church,

“CROMWELL LEONARD,

“Chairman of a committee of said Church.”

Dr. Gale was born in Warwick, Oct. 15, 1800 ; and was the son of Amory and Lucinda (Rich) Gale.

Besides attending the common schools of his native town, he spent some time at the academy in Chesterfield, N.H., and also at New Salem, Mass. For two or three years before attaining his majority, he labored on a farm in summer, and taught school in winter. In the spring of 1821, he commenced the study of medicine. He attended medical lectures at Dartmouth College, N.H., in 1822 ; and subsequently at the medical school of Brown University, R.I., where he received the degree of M.D. in 1824.

He commenced practice in Petersham ; but soon left, and entered into partnership with Dr. Batcheller, of Royalston, — his old medical preceptor ; and subsequently removed to Barre, where he remained about

six years, and then left on account of ill health. When his health was somewhat restored, he entered into practice at Amherst, N.H., and was there a number of years; but sickness again compelled him to give up the active duties of his profession. He was subsequently at Canton and South Scituate, Mass.

In his earlier years, he had desired to be a clergyman; but, on account of some bronchial difficulty, he relinquished the thought of the ministry. But, as years wore away, the cherished desire of his youth revived.

While at Amherst, N.H., he wrote some sermons, and preached occasionally in the neighboring towns; his first effort being at Brookline, N.H., in 1837. While at Canton, he preached there and elsewhere; and, when he removed to South Scituate, it was with the view of studying theology with Rev. Samuel J. May.

In the years 1843 and 1844, he preached about six months each at Wayland, East Bridgewater, and Pembroke; being also engaged, at the same time, in the active duties of a physician. He was ordained, as an evangelist, at Kingston, Nov. 19, 1844;¹ and, at the time he accepted the invitation to preach at Norton, was supplying the pulpit at Southington, Conn.

After leaving Norton, he preached for several months, during the summer and autumn, at Barnstable; but a return of his bronchial disease obliged him to give up public speaking. In 1849, he settled in the practice of medicine at Woonsocket, R.I.; where he remained till the autumn of 1853, when he bought a farm at East Medway, and removed thither; and is now there, attending to the duties of physician and farmer.

He was originally of the allopathic school of medicine; but, while in Norton, became a convert to homœopathy, and has since been of that school. He married, Nov. 3, 1825, Miss Martha Leland, of Warwick; and has had five children.

¹ Christian Register, Nov. 30, 1844.

After Mr. Gale closed his labors, Rev. John N. Belows preached a short time as a candidate. The parish took action relative to his settlement, May 31, 1848, and decided not to invite him. July 8, 1848, a meeting was called to consider the petition of Thomas Copeland and forty-six others, which was to see if the parish would invite Rev. William P. Tilden again to become their pastor; and, by a vote of twenty-one to two, he was *re-called* to assume the duties of that office, and was offered six hundred and fifty dollars yearly salary. Deacon Almond Tucker was authorized to communicate the vote to Mr. Tilden.

Under the date of July 21, Mr. Tilden, in a long letter, after expressing his grateful acknowledgments for this fresh proof of their confidence in and kind regards for him, says, "I do not think, under the circumstances, that it will be best for me to take again the office of pastor among you. I feel, therefore, that I must respectfully decline your kind invitation."

This decision was a sad announcement to many of his old friends; but they were not disheartened. No doubt his appeal to them, in the letter referred to, not to let "the disappointment" resulting from his declination "render them in any way indifferent to the settlement of a true Christian minister," did much good. They again looked about for a candidate; and in a few days, or on Sunday, Aug. 6, Rev. Frederic Hinckley preached his first sermon from their pulpit. His services were acceptable to most of the people; and, on the 11th of September, the parish voted, eighteen to six, "to invite Rev. Frederic Hinckley to settle in said society as a Gospel minister," and offered him six hundred dollars yearly salary. Three months' notice was to be given if either party wished to dissolve the relation. The Parish Committee were charged with the duty of informing the candidate of these votes.

At an adjourned meeting, Sept. 25, Mr. Hinckley's letter of acceptance was read. It was in these words: —

"NORTON, Sunday Eve, Sept. 24th, 1848.

GENTS, — In reply to your letter of the 11th inst., enclosing a copy of the vote of your society inviting me to settle with you, I return my acceptance of said invitation.

"If agreeable to your Society, I will commence my duties on the 1st of October. The vote offering me \$600 salary [says] nothing of the time of payment. If that could be semi-annually, in Jan. and July, it would be very acceptable to myself.

"Yours in Christian sincerity,

"FREDERIC HINCKLEY.

"To Dauphin King,
Stillman Smith,
James O. Messenger, } Parish Committee."

It was then "voted to comply with Mr. Hinckley's request to commence on the first of Oct." — "Voted, that the installation be performed on the sabbath; the parish reading the invitation of the society, and the acceptance of said invitation by Mr. Hinckley." The following we take from the church-records:—

"Oct. 1st. — Rev. Frederic Hinckley, recently of Leicester, was this day installed as minister of this church and society. Dea. Stillman Smith read a statement of the engagement that had been entered into by the society and Mr. Hinckley; and, in the name of the former, welcomed their new Pastor to his new sphere of duty. In response, Mr. Hinckley accepted his trust, and continued the services by a discourse on the ministerial relation."

After a pastorate of about two years, Mr. Hinckley resigned; and preached his farewell sermon, Oct. 27, 1850.

Rev. Frederic Hinckley was born in Boston, Nov. 3, 1820; and was the son of Allen and Hannah Hinckley. He attended the Adams Grammar School in his native city till nearly thirteen years of age, when he took the "Franklin Medal;" after which, he spent three years in a city store; then he was two years in the Public Latin School, and one year with a private tutor. He subsequently spent three years at the Divinity School, Cambridge; and graduated therefrom

July, 1843. He was ordained at Windsor, Vt., Dec. 13, 1843. He also preached for a time at Leicester, after leaving Windsor. Since leaving Norton, he has been settled at Haverhill; Hartford, Conn.; and is now pastor of a Unitarian church in Lowell.

He married, Jan. 2, 1844, Miss Sarah A. Hews, daughter of Abraham Hews, Esq., of Boston; and has had several children.

The Parish Committee were authorized, Dec. 30, 1850, to invite Mr. George A. Carnes to preach till the annual meeting in March; and he did so.

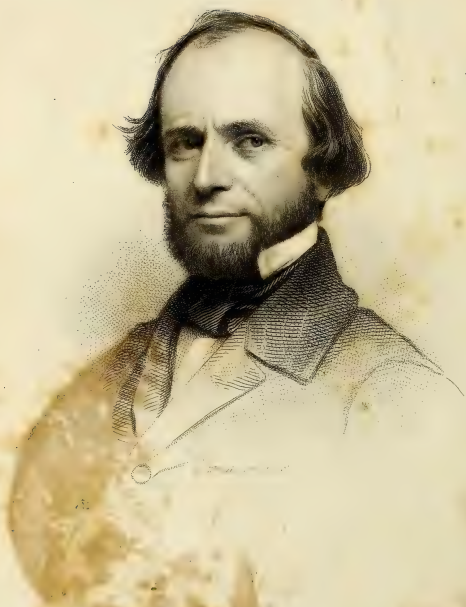
From the 1st of April, 1851, to the middle of November of the same year, the following persons preached, — probably not all of them as candidates: Charles Robinson, Francis B. Knapp, Benjamin Kent, George W. Lippitt, Charles Briggs, William W. Hebbard, Herman Snow, F. A. Whitney, D. W. Stevens, and J. K. Waite. George Osgood supplied from Nov. 16, 1851, to Jan. 26, 1852. From that time to the middle of April, Josiah K. Waite, Warren Burton, Samuel F. Clark, Solon W. Bush, and Charles Briggs, supplied the pulpit.

Rev. George Faber Clark — after the society had heard some twenty candidates, more or less — commenced preaching April 18, 1852. He remained four Sundays. Rev. N. Whitman, in accordance with a previous arrangement, preached the last three Sundays of May.

Mr. Clark returned, on the 1st of June, to fulfil an engagement of four weeks more. On the 26th of June, 1852, — having preached here seven Sundays, — the parish “voted unanimously to invite the Rev. George F. Clark to settle with said Society as their teacher and Pastor,” with a yearly salary of six hundred dollars.

Hon. Cromwell Leonard, Hon. John Crane, and Benjamin S. Hall, were chosen a committee to inform the candidate of the votes just passed. They forthwith attended to their duty; and, through them, Mr. Clark returned an affirmative answer in these words: —





G. F. Clark

"NORTON, June 26th, 1852.

"To the members of the Congregational Parish.

"GENTLEMEN, — I have, through your Committee, received a copy of the votes this day passed, inviting me to settle with you as your Pastor, and offering me a salary of six hundred dollars per year.

"The unanimity with which the invitation has been extended is very grateful to me; and I do not feel in my heart to decline it. I therefore cordially accept it, and will enter upon the discharge of the duties as Pastor at such time as we may be able hereafter to determine upon.

"Most sincerely and truly yours, &c.,

"G. F. CLARK."

It was then voted, that all the arrangements relating to the installation "be referred to the standing Parish Committee." Mr. Clark continued the supply of the pulpit. The installation took place Wednesday, Aug. 11, 1852. No "council" was called; but eight churches were invited by their pastor and delegates to be present, and assist in the installation services, which were in the order given below:—

Anthem. Introductory Prayer, and Reading of the Scriptures, by Rev. William A. Whitwell, of Eastor Hymn, by Rev. J. Pierpont:—

Thou who pitiest the heart-broken,
And dost save their souls from death;
Who hast words of comfort spoken
By the Man of Nazareth;—

Hath thy Spirit clean departed,
That of old, by Jesus, gave
Healing to the broken-hearted,
And deliverance to the slave;—

Brought to life a sleeping maiden
By the hand of death oppressed;
And, to laborers heavy-laden,
Promised that their souls should rest?

Let that Spirit on thy servant
Be, as erst it was on Him;
Then his lips shall be as fervent
As are those of seraphim;—

And the gospel that he preacheth
 Shall his Master's gospel be;
 And the doctrine that he teacheth
 With the Saviour's shall agree;—

And the hearer that believeth
 That old gospel shall be blest:
 He that doeth it receiveth
 "Peace on earth," and heavenly rest.

Sermon by Rev. S. F. Clark, of Athol, — brother of the Pastor elect; Prayer of Installation by Rev. L. W. Leonard, D.D., of Dublin, N.H.; Charge by Rev. William P. Tilden, of Walpole, N.H.; Right Hand by Rev. D. W. Stevens, of Mansfield; Hymn 764th of "Christian Hymns;"¹ Address to the Society, and Concluding Prayer, by Rev. C. H. Brigham, of Taunton; Anthem; Benediction by the Pastor.

The connection between the pastor and people, commenced under such favorable auspices, still continues.

On the first Sunday of November, 1857, and at the morning services of six successive Sundays, the pastor set forth some of his views in relation to "the Church," and the need of making it a more simple, democratic, and evangelical institution than it has been for centuries past; and closed with the presentation of a Declaration of Principles that should form the basis of a true, broad, liberal Christian church; which should unite in its embrace all the moral and religious life of the community, in opposition to the shocking inhumanities, monstrous wrongs, and unchristian practices, that are perpetrated by the strong upon the weak and defenceless sons and daughters of earth. After having been discussed at several public meetings, and considered by the church on two separate occasions, they were unanimously adopted as a substitute for the covenant which we have recorded on page 201. We here give them to our readers, with the hope that this little lump of leaven will lead to a widespread movement of *raising* all true and sincere followers of Jesus to the broad platform of thinking differently in love, — to the unity of the spirit in the

¹ The Collection of Hymns used by the society.

bonds of peace. And may God hasten the day! Until it comes, may all —

“Learn to labor and to wait.”

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES,

*Unanimously adopted by the First Congregational Church in Norton,
Feb. 5, 1858.*

Wishing to be no longer strangers, and feeling ourselves heirs of the covenant confirmed before of God to the fathers, we the undersigned, pastor and people, parents and children, constituting the First Church in Norton, of the liberal church of Massachusetts, of the church universal, — of which God is the founder, and Christ the head, — hereby express our faith in God, the Father; in the religion taught and exemplified by his Son, Jesus Christ; and in the truths of the Bible.

We recognize the church, co-ordinately with the family and the state, as a divine and permanent form of human society.

Believing that it is the sacred privilege of all to judge for themselves what is right, we leave all our members perfectly free to go directly to the Scriptures, and all other sources of divine truth, to learn of God and Christ and duty.

Our object is to labor together for the promotion of Christian righteousness in our hearts and the world. Hence, as members of the church universal, we extend our fellowship to all Christian believers, invite their sympathy and aid, and will joyfully co-operate with them in the work of the gospel.

We aim at the highest Christian culture, spiritual birth and growth, and the perfection of our natures;

To seek a true knowledge, and the pure practice of Christianity;

To make our homes the abodes of Christian virtue and truth;

To bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;

To cultivate an affectionate and Christian interest in each other's welfare;

To be temperate in all things;

To do good as we have opportunity;

To break the yoke of civil and religious tyranny, and let the oppressed everywhere go free;

To do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God;

And, as far as in us lies, to live peaceably with all men.

To aid in the work for which we are associated, there shall be chosen annually, on the first Tuesday of January, —

1. A PASTORAL COMMITTEE, consisting of the minister, and five brothers and five sisters, whose duty it shall be to consult together for the general religious interests of the church; the lay-members aiding the minister in his pastoral intercourse with the people, in becoming acquainted with their spiritual wants, in promoting a Christian spirit of brotherly love, and in building up a true church of Christ.

2. A PHILANTHROPIC COMMITTEE, consisting of the minister, and three brothers and three sisters, whose duty it shall be to devise plans of philanthropic action, and superintend the execution of them.

3. A COMMITTEE ON THE SUNDAY SCHOOL, consisting of the minister, the superintendent, and two brothers and three sisters, whose duty it shall be to look after the interests of the children and youth; to encourage their attendance at the church and the Sunday school; and consult together for their moral and religious interests.

Any person wishing to unite with us in this purpose of religious worship, education, fellowship, and philanthropy, can do so by affixing his or her name to this Declaration of Principles.

Rev. George Faber Clark was the twelfth child and eighth son of Jonas and Mary (Twitchel) Clark, of Dublin, N.H.; and was born Feb. 24, 1817. He was the grandson of William and Sarah (Locke) Clark, of Townsend, Mass.; great-grandson of William and Eunice (Taylor) Clark, of Townsend; and the great-great-grandson of Samuel Clark (whose wife was Rebecca Nichols?), who settled at Concord, Mass., about the year 1680, and who was probably born in London, and came to America, with his father, about 1660, when a small boy.

The mother of Rev. G. F. Clark was the daughter of Abel Twitchel, of Dublin, N.H.; who was the son of Joseph and Deborah (Fairbanks) Twitchel, of Sherborn, Mass.; grandson of Joseph and Elizabeth (Holbrook) Twitchel, of Sherborn; great-grandson of Joseph and Lydia Twitchel, of Sherborn; great-great-grandson of Benjamin and Mary Twitchel, of Sherborn

and Lancaster ; and great-great-great-grandson of Joseph Twitchel, who probably came from Dorsetshire, England, about 1633, and settled at Dorchester, Mass., and was admitted to the freeman's oath, May 14, 1634.¹

Jonas Clark, the father of the subject of this sketch, was a clothier by trade ; and built the first clothier's shop or fulling-mill in Dublin, N.H.

In the excellent and somewhat celebrated common schools of that town, Rev. Mr. Clark was educated till his fifteenth year. He was also, for some years, a constant member of the Sunday school connected with the Congregational society under the pastoral care of Rev. Levi W. Leonard ; who, by his untiring zeal and labors in the cause of popular education and sound morality, has won for himself the enviable appellation of "the *Oberlin* of Cheshire County."

On the 17th of October, 1831, Mr. Clark was apprenticed to Andrews Emery, of Jaffrey, N.H., to learn the art and mystery of shoemaking. His term of service was to extend till he was twenty-one years old, with the privilege of attending the short school of two months in the winter of each year.

Having served about half his term of apprenticeship, he became interested in religion, and was impressed with an ardent desire to labor for the cause of truth and humanity ; and, therefore, determined that he would "quit the *bench* for the *pulpit*."

Accordingly, having matured his plans, when nineteen years of age, with the consent of his father, and not without some misgivings on his part, he purchased his time of his employer ; and in September, 1836, with only fifteen dollars in his pocket, and entirely dependent upon his own resources, he entered Melville Academy, at Jaffrey, N.H., and commenced preparing for college.

The coming winter, he taught a school of six weeks' duration ; and in February, 1837, entered Phillips

¹ For more particulars of the Twitchels, see history of the family, by Rev. Abner Morse, of Sherborn.

Exeter Academy, at Exeter, N.H., with the hope of obtaining assistance from the beneficiary fund of that institution.

He failed, however, to receive any aid. But still he pursued his studies; teaching school in winter, and sometimes returning for a few months to his trade of shoemaking, in order to acquire the "material aid" necessary to prosecute his plans. In the spring of 1840, — a few weeks before he was to leave the academy for the college, — his health gave away; and, for about eighteen months, he was unable to study; during which time, he relinquished the idea of a collegiate education, but afterwards pursued his studies, at Exeter and elsewhere, till August, 1843, when he entered the Theological School connected with Harvard College, Cambridge; from which, having completed the course of study prescribed, he graduated in July, 1846; being about two hundred dollars in debt for his education. He immediately went to Leverett, Mass., where he preached about three months. In February, 1847, he preached a few Sundays at Charlemont, Mass.; and, in March following, he was invited to take the charge of the remnant of a society there. His eyes having become very weak before completing his theological studies, so as to disallow their continuous use, and some encouragement having been given him that his services would be acceptable, a part of the time, in the neighboring town of Shelburne, — where there was a small band of liberal Christians, — he decided to labor in that "hill country" for a season; and went thither the 1st of April, and preached for thirteen months to the two societies of Charlemont and Shelburne, — about one-third of the time at the latter place. Aug. 11, 1847, he was ordained at Charlemont as an evangelist.

On the 23d of April, 1848, he was invited to take charge of the society at Warwick. He accepted the invitation, and was installed there Sunday, P.M., May 14, 1848. After a ministry of four years, he dissolved his connection with that society on the first Sunday of

April, 1852; and, in two weeks from that day, preached his first sermon at Norton.

He married, April 1, 1847, Miss Harriet Emery, born Dec. 28, 1817. She was the daughter of Daniel, jun., and Polly (Felt) Emery, of Jaffrey, N.H.

For many years after the organization of the religious society in this town, there were no hymn-books for the choir or the worshippers generally. It was customary for one of the deacons, in his official seat, to read two lines of a hymn, which the choir would sing; he would then repeat two more, which were sung; and so on to the close of the hymn. An edition of Watts's "Psalms and Hymns" was used till after the death of Rev. P. Clarke. When this book was introduced is unknown. On the erection of a new house, and the settlement of Rev. Mr. Bridge, Hon. Samuel Crocker, George A. Crocker, and S. O. Dunbar, of Taunton, presented a sufficient number of hymn-books for their use to the society; for which a vote of thanks was returned March 28, 1836. These books were generally known as the "New-York Collection;" first published, we believe, in 1820. In 1850, the parish, by a vote, agreed to change their hymn-books; and adopted the book entitled "Christian Hymns," known as the "Cheshire Collection," compiled, by a committee of the Cheshire Pastoral Association of New Hampshire, in 1844. A sufficient number were purchased by the parish for the choir, and one for each pew in the meeting-house.

On the 1st of May, 1850, the ladies of the parish held a tea-party and fair, the proceeds of which were to be used to purchase an organ for the meeting-house. They were successful in their efforts: and the organ was bought, Aug. 28, 1850, of George Stevens, of Cambridge, at a cost of five hundred dollars; and was immediately placed in the gallery, back of the singing-seats. By good judges, it is said to be a very fine instrument for the price at which it was bought.

CHAPTER XVI.

DEACONS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

"The deacons must be grave; not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre." — PAUL.

THE exact number of deacons that have officiated in the Congregational church, and the time when all of them were chosen, &c., I have been unable to ascertain.

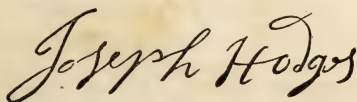
During Mr. Palmer's ministry, with the exception of baptisms and admissions, the church-records are quite incomplete. We believe, however, that the list of deacons we give below comprises about all who have been chosen to that office by the Congregational church since its organization. Probably, for about sixteen years after the church was established, there was but one deacon. Between the pulpit and the congregation, in the first and second meeting-house, was what was called the "deacons' seat;" because it was always occupied by them on Sunday during divine service, if present at meeting. There are those living who well recollect when the deacons' seat was occupied by Deacon Seth Smith and Deacon Daniel Dean; and, still later, by Deacon Asa Copeland and Deacon Lysander Makepeace.

Dec. 9, 1714, Nicholas White was chosen the first deacon; and he officiated, without doubt, till 1737, when he was dismissed, with others, for the purpose of forming a new church in the North Precinct. He took a conspicuous part in establishing the North Precinct of Norton, and the formation of the church there; of which he was also the first deacon. (See early settlers, p. 92.)

July 6, 1730, John Briggs, "the eldest," was chosen deacon; and probably held the office till he died, June 29, 1750. (See early settlers, p. 77.)

Sept. 5, 1734, John Briggs, 2d, was chosen. He was dismissed Dec. 18, 1745, at his own request, for being "disguised with strong drink." He was selectman two years, and assessor five. (See early settlers.)

Dec. 9. 1736, Joseph Hodges was elected deacon. He was born about the year 1689, and was the son of Elder Henry and Esther (Gallup) Hodges, of Taunton, and grandson of William Hodges, the common ancestor of all the Hodges' families in this vicinity; who "probably came to America" as early as 1633, and was at Taunton in 1643. Deacon Joseph Hodges married, March 11, 1712, Bethiah Williams; and soon afterwards settled in the southerly part of this town, at what was called the "Crooked Meadow," on the farm now owned and occupied by Ezra Perry. He had eight children.¹ He was the "Major Joseph Hodges" who went on an expedition to Cape Breton in 1745; and is supposed to have died while absent on that expedition, aged about fifty-seven. In civil as well as in military affairs, he was a man of some note; having been six years one of the selectmen, and four years an assessor, and one year a representative to the General Court. We here give his autograph, written in 1729.



May 1, 1746, John Andrews and Benjamin Hodges were chosen deacons. Mr. Andrews was eight years one of the assessors, one year a selectman, and two years town-treasurer (see early settlers, p. 75). Mr. Hodges was the son of Elder Henry Hodges; and, of course, brother of Deacon Joseph Hodges, already mentioned. He lived at the southerly part of the town, near "Crooked Meadow," where Ephraim Allen now (1858) resides. His wife's name was Abiah. He had seven (?) children, and probably died in the

¹ See Hodges' Family Record, by Almond D. Hodges, Esq., p. 14.

autumn of 1754; for, on the 9th of December of that year, William Stone is chosen "a precent Comiteeman, in the Room of Benjamin Hodges, deceased." He was frequently moderator of the church-meetings between the ministry of Mr. Avery and that of Mr. Palmer. His autograph was written in 1749.

Benjamin Hodges

Benjamin Copeland and Samuel Dean were chosen deacons, Oct. 2, 1754. Mr. Copeland was the seventh child of William and Mary (Bass) (Webb) Copeland, of Braintree, and the grandson of Lawrence and Lydia Copeland, of Braintree; and was born in that town, Oct. 5, 1708.¹ He married, Nov. 21, 1734, Sarah Allen; and removed to Norton with his family about 1739, where he carried on the business of a tanner and currier, at the place now (1858) owned by his grandson, Capt. Thomas Copeland. He had eight or nine children; and died at the good old age of eighty-two, Oct. 20, 1790. His autograph was written in 1752.

Ben^a Copeland

Mr. Dean — the son of Deacon Samuel Dean, of Taunton, grandson of John, and great-grandson of John who settled at Taunton about 1638 — was born Oct. 17, 1700. He married, first, Mary Avery; second, Rachel Dwight; third, Widow Margaret King.² He settled in Norton as early as 1727, and lived here for a few years; and then removed to Dedham, where he kept a public-house for a time. He returned to Norton in 1747 (?), and lived at the place owned, and probably built the house now (1858) occupied, by

¹ See Family Memorial.

² See Dean Family, Genealogical Register, vol. iii. p. 385.

Elkanah Wood, sen. He died March 30, 1775. We give his autograph, written in 1752.

Sam^r Dean

“Deacon Benjamin Pearson’s” name appears on the valuation-list of 1777; but when he was chosen is unknown. He married Sarah Stone, Aug. 19, 1741; and he was then said to be “of Mortlone,” but probably soon afterwards settled in Norton. His second wife was Abiah Shaw; married May 26, 1784. He died March 2, 1799, supposed to be “more than 80 years old.”

In March, 1779, “Dea. Daniel Dean” was chosen one of the selectmen. When he was chosen deacon is unknown; but probably it was either in 1778 or the winter of 1779. He was the son of Deacon Samuel Dean, already mentioned; and was born about 1745, probably at Dedham. He married, Sept. 27, 1770, Lydia Whitman, of Bridgewater, and had two children. He was selectman seven years, assessor two, and representative one; lived on the homestead of his father; and died Feb. 7, 1805, in the sixtieth year of his age.

March 15, 1784, I find the name of “Dea. Seth Smith” on the parish-records; but when he was chosen deacon is unknown. He was the son of Seth and Elizabeth (Allen) Smith, who were married at Weston, Sept. 30, 1725; and might have been the grandson of Nicholas Smith, one of the first settlers of the town; for he had a son Seth. Deacon Smith was born Sept. 13, 1734. He had four wives. First, Sarah Cobb, 2d, married Oct. 10, 1754; by whom he had six children. She died May 13, 1768. Second, Esther Dean, 2d; married Sept. 19, 1769. Had by her two children. She died Dec. 8, 1787. Third, Lois Fisher, of Taunton; married 1788 (?). She died Aug. 18, 1794. Fourth, Mrs. (?) Anna Hodges, of Taunton. He died Sept. 9, 1813. He

was selectman four years, and assessor one. His autograph was written in 1752.

Seth Smith

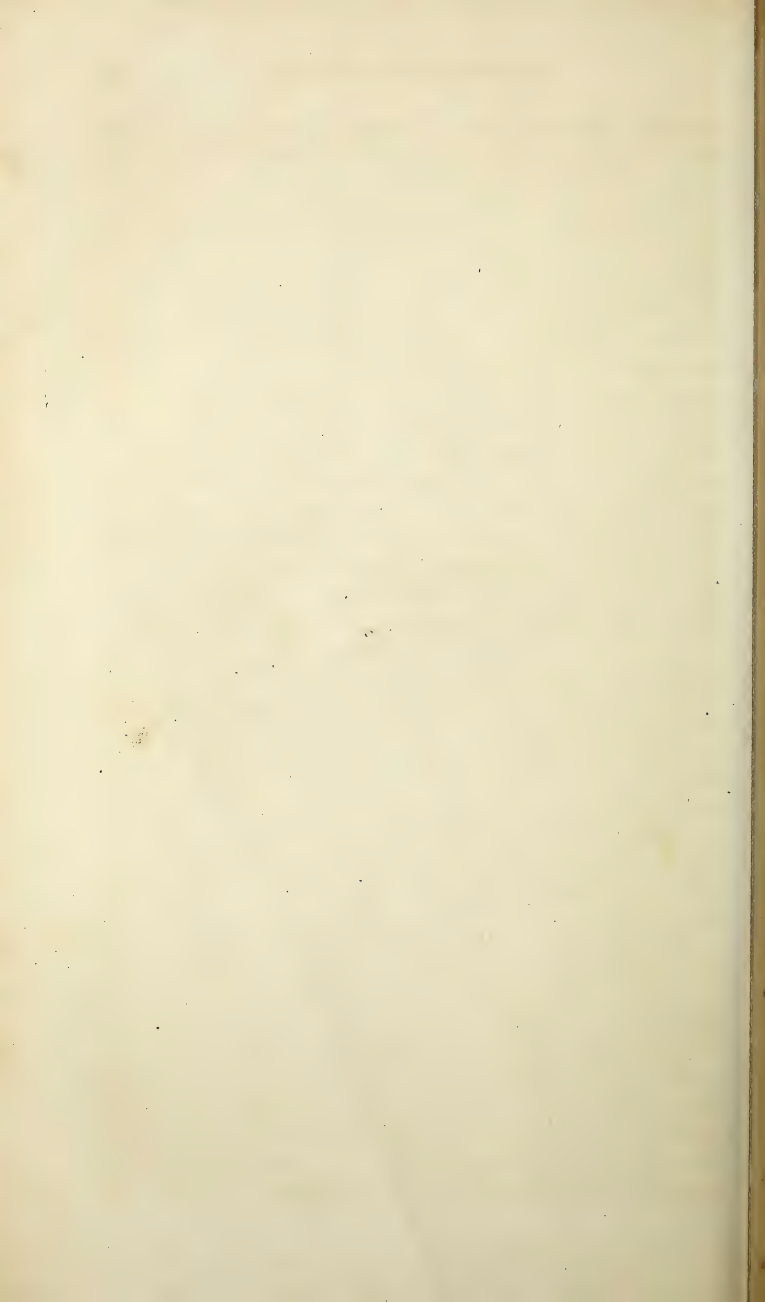
April 1, 1803, Asa Copeland and Lysander Makepeace were chosen deacons. Deacon Copeland was the son of Deacon Benjamin Copeland, already mentioned; was born May 8, 1752, and lived on the old homestead of his father. He married Rachel Briggs, about 1781, and had eight children. For second wife, he married, Sept. 3, 1801, Abigail Newcomb. He probably resigned Dec. 2, 1824; for, at that time, "It was voted that the thanks of the church be presented to Dea. Asa Copeland, for the long and useful services he has afforded the church in his office." He died Dec. 14, 1829. Deacon Makepeace remained in office till the spring of 1832; when he and others withdrew from the church, and organized the Trinitarian society. For further account of him, see history of that society.

Dec. 2, 1824, Daniel Lane was elected deacon in the place of Asa Copeland, resigned. He was born April 22, 1771; and was the fourth son of Ephraim and Elizabeth (Copeland) Lane, the grandson of Ephraim and Mehitable (Stone) Lane, great-grandson of Ephraim and Ruth ("Shepperson") Lane, and the great-great-grandson of John Lane, one of the first settlers of this town. Like most of the young of his time, Deacon Lane enjoyed but few advantages for obtaining an education; yet, by observation and experience, he succeeded in storing his mind with much practical wisdom and good sense; so that his counsel was often sought for, and valued by his friends and townsmen. He served the town four years as selectman; and was also chosen once or twice more to that office, but declined to accept it. Subsequently, he was four years one of the assessors of the town. He was more than thirty-eight years a member of the



J. Grayson Lith. Boston.

Daniel Lane



church; and held the office of deacon about twelve years, when he resigned. On the 30th of September, 1836, when his successor was chosen, it was "voted that the thanks of the church be presented to Dea. Daniel Lane, for the long and useful services he has afforded the church in his office." As an officer of the church, his many virtues, his practical good sense, his love of peace, his unostentatious life, rendered his advice of great value; and especially was it so to his venerable pastor in the trying scene through which he passed two or three years before his death. In all the positions of life he occupied, he was faithful and reliable. He married, Nov. 12, 1794, Eunice Danforth; and they had ten children. He died Nov. 1, 1857, aged eighty-six years, six months, and nine days; and all feel that a "good old man" has gone from us. He retained his faculties, in a remarkable degree, to the last. Seldom was he absent from church on Sunday. He was able to labor, and did labor, up to within forty-eight hours of his death; which was caused by taking a sudden cold.

April 4, 1833, Stillman Smith was chosen in place of Deacon Makepeace, who had previously withdrawn from the church. He was the son of Araunah and Eleanor (Leonard) Smith, grandson of David and Abigail (Gilbert) Smith, and great-grandson of Seth and Elizabeth (Allen) Smith; and was born Oct. 27, 1793. He married Eunice Wetherell, 2d, Nov. 28, 1816, by whom he had six children. His wife died Oct. 21, 1856.

Sept. 30, 1836, Almond Tucker was elected deacon. He was born June 15, 1804; and is the son of Benajah and Lydia (Hunt) Tucker, grandson of Benajah and Mehitable (Allen) Tucker, great-grandson of Cornelius and Waitstill (Eddy) Tucker, and great-great-grandson of Robert Tucker, one of the first settlers of the town. Deacon Tucker married Betsy Hathaway, of Dighton, in 1829, and had eight children by her. She died July 27, 1843. In 1845, he married, for second wife, Nancy C. White, and has had one child by her. He

resigned his office, Jan. 29, 1854; and, in 1856, removed to Attleborough, where he now (1858) resides.

Dec. 3, 1854, Adolphus Day Hunt was chosen the successor of Deacon Tucker. He was born July 13, 1808. He is the son of Josiah and Fanny (Lincoln) Hunt, and the grandson of Samuel and Abigail (Day) Hunt. He married, in 1835, Emily J. Drown, of Attleborough; and has had by her two children.

Deacon Smith and Deacon Hunt are now (1858) the officiating deacons of the church.

CHAPTER XVII.

MEETING-HOUSES OF THE CONGREGATIONAL PARISH.

“The groves were God’s first temples.” — BRYANT.

WE have already seen, on page 33, that the site for a meeting-house was designated by a committee of the General Court, during the precinct controversy. It was to be located on the northward side of the road leading to Crossman’s Way, where that road was intersected by the one leading from John Hodges’ to Beech Island. This would bring the location at the lower part of the Common between the Mansion House and the house occupied by George W. Wilde, a few feet southerly from the Hayscales. As soon as the precinct-bill had passed the General Court, and received the signature of the governor, the inhabitants made active preparations for the speedy erection of a house of public worship, where they and their children could enjoy “the means of Grace.” They had struggled too long and earnestly in this matter to be easily turned aside from their purpose. They knew what they wanted, and what they could do. Hence they

went to work with the zeal almost of the prophets of old; and in three months and two days after the court established the precinct, or Jan. 18, 1709-10, a tax-bill of £42 was made for the erection of a meeting-house, and placed in the hands of Constable Samuel Hodges for collection.

We here give it to our readers:—

RATE-BILL FOR THE FIRST MEETING-HOUSE.

NAMES.	Heads.		Real Estate.			Personal Estate.		
	£	s.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
George Leonard	01	00	01	07	03	01	02	08
Samuell Brintnell	01	00	00	05	09	00	15	04
Samuell Hodges	00	10	00	02	06	00	07	02
John Cob	01	00	00	00	00	00	03	06
John Smith	00	10	00	01	00	00	06	07
Selvanis Cambell	00	10	00	01	08	00	05	04
Nathaniell Fisher	00	10	00	00	08	00	02	04
Andrew Grovier	00	10	00	00	09	00	03	11
Ephreim Grovier	00	10	00	00	09	00	04	06
Thomas Grovier	00	10	00	00	09	00	07	06
Nathaniell Hodges	00	10	00	01	09	00	06	03
John Hodges	00	10	00	09	07	00	09	06
Thomas Stevens	00	10	00	09	07	00	06	09
Eliezer Edy	00	10	00	00	07	00	05	00
Ebenezer Edy	00	10	00	00	08	00	05	10
Benjamin Newland	00	10	00	00	09	00	01	06
Robert Tucker	00	10	00	00	09	00	02	04
Nicholas White	00	10	00	03	01	00	10	04
John Andrews	00	00	00	00	09	00	00	00
John Skiner	00	10	00	01	08	00	03	07
John Hall	00	10	00	00	09	00	06	02
Joseph Brigs	00	10	00	00	10	00	03	03
Richard Brigs	00	10	00	01	03	00	01	00
Eliezer Fisher	00	10	00	01	05	00	03	06
Israell Fisher	00	10	00	00	00	00	01	06
Benjamin Williams	00	10	00	01	07	00	05	06
John Wetharell	00	10	00	08	00	00	09	10
William Wetharell	00	10	00	02	02	00	07	00
John Austin	00	10	00	02	03	00	07	03
Nicolas Smith	00	10	00	08	10	00	05	02

Rate-Bill, continued.

NAMES.	Heads.		Real Estate.			Personal Estate.		
	£	s.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
John Briggs, Jun.	00	10	00	01	00	00	03	09
John Caswell	01	00	00	01	01	00	08	08
Benjamin Caswell.	00	10	00	04	03	00	04	07
John Newland	00	10	00	05	10	00	08	10
Seth Dorman	00	10	00	00	00	00	01	06
Jeremiah Wetherell	00	10	00	00	00	00	01	06
Joseph Eliot	00	10	00	00	00	00	01	06
William Hodges	00	10	00	02	08	00	01	06
Mathew White	00	10	00	00	09	00	05	04
Ephreim Sheldon	00	10	00	01	05	00	05	00
Isaac Shapard	00	10	00	00	00	00	02	06
William Wetharell, Jun.	00	10	00	00	00	00	01	06
John Briggs, Sen.	00	10	00	00	08	00	01	06
Daniel Braman	00	10	00	01	05	00	03	06
John Lane	00	10	00	00	06	00	01	06
Peter Aldrich	00	10	00	00	09	00	06	11
Nathaniell Hervey	00	10	00	00	00	00	01	06

“This Rate, being for the building a meeting-house in Taunton north precinct, was made by us, the subscribers, this 18 day of Jen., 1709–10, being 42 pounds and 21 shillings put in for the constable.

“GEORGE LEONARD, }
JOHN SKINNER, } Assessors.”

Without a doubt, the house was erected early in the spring of 1710, on the site designated by the court's committee. Rev. Pitt Clarke says it stood “about ten feet” to the east of the second meeting-house. The site of the second house is marked on the map, in the introductory chapter; and it will be seen at a glance, that there was good ground for the complaints we have recorded in the third chapter (pp. 30 and 31), on account of the first meeting-house not being located near the centre of the precinct.

Of the dimensions of this house we can learn nothing. It, no doubt, fronted directly to the south; and was a respectable house for those times. Yet, we

presume, it was not much better than many of the barns at the present day. When built, it had a gallery on three sides. The house was not completely finished for some years after its erection. In 1714, — the year that Mr. Avery was ordained, — a rate of twenty pounds was made towards finishing the meeting-house. There were probably no pews, or at least but one or two, for several years after its occupancy for public worship. In the early history of New England, as soon as convenient after the erection of a house of worship, a pew was made for the minister. Some of the richest and most aristocratic citizens of the town sometimes also indulged in such a luxury; but, if they did so, it was at their own expense. The people generally, in their poverty, were obliged to put up with such accommodations as could be procured without much trouble or expense. Rude boards, or plank seats without any backs, — perhaps laid upon blocks or stones, thus giving them a proper elevation above the floor in front and at the sides of the pulpit, — were, in those times, considered amply sufficient for the physical comfort of those who went to the house of God for the sole purpose of worship. Yet, even on these poor apologies for seats, the people were not allowed to arrange themselves promiscuously at pleasure or convenience. The men were usually seated on one side of the broad aisle or the passage leading from the front-door to the pulpit, and the women on the other. The wealth and rank or the standing of the individual in society also determined whether he should have a front or a back seat.

At a meeting held May 23, 1715, the matter of seating the meeting-house was considered, and acted upon. The record says, —

“Whereas they Voted at a Town-meeting, may the 2 day, 1715, to have the Inhabitants of the Town seeted in the meeting-House according to order, they now Voted to choose a Committee to Seet the people as abovesaid: and yt the said Committee Shall have power to Seet the people in all the Seets in the meeting-House, Except the pews and the pew

Round the Table ; which place the Town Reserves to themselves to Seet, When they Se cause, or to take down. and the Rules they Gave to the Committee To act by ware as followeth : —

“ That they have Respect, in the first place, to What Every one hath payd to the building of the meeting-House ; Secondly, to what Every one doth now pay to the mantaining of the minister, and other Town-Charges ; thirdly, that they have Respect to Age ; and that There famalyes are Seeted accordingly.

“ They made Choice of George Leonard, Samuel Brintnall, Nicholas White, Thomas Stevens, and John Briggs, to be a committee to Seet the meeting-house as abovesaid.”

“ October the 24th, 1715, the committee that ware Appointed to Seet the meeting-house made their Report to the Town, by a writeing under their hands, how they had Seeted the Inhabitants of the Town in the meeting-house ; Which writing was then Read to the Town by George Leonard, Town Clerk.”

As soon as the people are seated “ according to order ” in the meeting-house, the town undertake to regulate other matters, as the vote we here give shows : —

“ Nov. 29th, 1715, It was put to vote, Wether the pew Round the Table where the Deacon Sets shoold be Taken down, or whether it shoold stand and not be Took down ; and the Vote past that it shoold stand, and not be Took down, — it being a very clear vote.

“ Nicholas Smith Entered his protest against it.”

Sept. 18, 1716, the town voted “ To Samuel Hodges, for Timber about the meeeting-Hous, 01—01—06.”

In a short time, the pew near the deacon’s seat became again a source of trouble. We here present the reader with the proof : —

“ At a Town-meeting in July 24th, 1717, The town did voat that ye act that ye town passed the 29th day of november, 1715, that the pew agining to the Decon’s seat shuld stand, — the town do at this time Repeall said act, and make it null, void, and of no Effect, as tho’ it had never been ; and the said pew be taken down and Removed ; and that thar be

a Raill Sett up before the decon's seatt, and faced with bords, as it was bult at first, and a Communion-table bult on the toape thereof; and the Raills, befor the fore seats that was Cutt, to be bult out to their former Lingth again.

"It being a very clear voat, & not one negative to the Contrary. Emediatley Leftenant Brintinal, George Leonard, Thomas Stephens, Joseph Briggs, Beniamin newland, Eliazer fisher, Se., Thomas Grover, Se., John Hall, Thomas Skinner, Se., Ephraem Grover, Enteread thare protest against it.

"Jeremiah basit Entred his protest in the Evning of sd. day."

"Norton, July ye 27, 1717, & beniamin williams protests against the town Repeling aney former act made by the towne of norton, that the pue or Seat Round the tabl before ye pulpit in the meeting-hous, in sd. norton, should stand, & be Seated; allso against town's, or ane Comity chosen the last town-meeating, taking down or altring said pew or seat, or the too fore seats belo, in sd. meeting-hous."

How the matter was settled the record saith not: probably the pew was "took down."

Nov. 2, 1719, there was voted by the town "To John Briggs, grand Se., for Sweeping the meating-house, 01—00—00; To Richard Briggs, for Locking and unlocking the meeating-hous, 01—02—09." For some years subsequent, similar votes were passed, — John Briggs receiving, for sweeping, one pound; and Richard Briggs, for unlocking the house, thirteen shillings and sixpence.

In 1738, there was "voted to the Rev. Mr. Joseph Avery, for his negro's sweeping the meeting-House, and Locking and unlocking the same, £2—0—0."

In later years, after his dismissal, Mr. Avery was paid for "sweeping and Looking after the meating-house."

Oct. 16, 1721, "voted to pay Ebenezer Burt, for mending the ketch of ye meeting-house dore, 0—1—0."

Dec. 31, 1722, it was "voted yt ye interest of ye towne of norton's Part of ye Last fifty thousand Pounds Bank Shall Go towards ye finishing of Norton meeting-house."

June 20, 1723, it was "voted that the Selectmen that are now shall Lay out our town's Part of the Interest money that was Granted towards ye finishing ye meeting-house; that they shall Lay it out towards ye Lathing and Plastering ye sd. meeting-house, and in mending ye Glass, some time this fall coming; and Give a account of theyr doings tharein to ye towne."

Sept. 14, 1724; voted "to Elezer fisher, for worke about ye meeting-house, 0—18—1."

Sept. 26, 1732, "Voted to John Wetherel, Sen., for ye comunion-table, & nails and bords & work dun apon that akounte, the sum of 01—0—0."

At a precinct¹-meeting held Nov. 24, 1737, they "Voted for Repairing the meeting-house, and for makeing the Precint-Rate, and to Git a Lock for sd. meeting-House, the sum of £10—00—00."

"Sept. 25th, 1739, the Precint Voted for to Raise another Gallery above the other Gallery; that ye meeting-house be Borded below, and claborded above, where it is wanting; that John Andrews, Benjamin Hodges, and Ephraim Lane, shall be a Comitee to Buld a Galery [and] too [make] Seets all over the other Galerys, and Bord and Clabord the meeting-house, whare it is wanting Round the outside, at the charge of the sd. Precent. [They also] voted the sum of 30—00—00 for the Raising the Galery, and Börding and Clabording the same."

It is somewhat doubtful whether these votes were ever carried into effect. If so, it is evident that the house was graced or *disgraced* with the two galleries, one above the other. If the second gallery was added, it must have been done — we judge from the record — by raising the roof up, so as to give more height to the house. We think the upper gallery would have

¹ We will here state that the town managed all the pecuniary affairs relating to the minister and meeting-house till 1731, when the North-Precinct religious society was established. From that time till the North Precinct ceased to be a part of Norton, in 1770, the ministerial affairs were managed by the parish or South Precinct. From 1770 to 1783, when the parish was incorporated, the town again assumed the control of the ministerial matters. Since the parish was incorporated, the town has had no voice in parochial affairs.

been rather an awkward place to be seated in. Perhaps it was designed more especially for the negroes.

The project of building a new meeting-house was mooted in 1740, but not much progress made in that direction: for at a precinct-meeting on the 5th of January, 1740-41, "Thare was a vote Caled for, to Know whether they would Buld a new meeting-house where the old meeting-house Stands, or near thareabouts; and it passed in the negative." Immediately after the dismissal of Mr. Avery, the question relative to a new meeting-house was revived; but at the annual meeting of the precinct, March 1, 1748-9, they "voted that they would do nothing about Bulding of a meeting-house at Presant."

Nearly two years go by before the project is again seriously revived. Two or three ministers had been invited to settle in the precinct, but had declined. Perhaps it was thought, if a new house of worship was built, a minister would be more likely to accept a call. No doubt, there were a variety of considerations that induced some individuals to present the following petition to their Prudential Committee:—

"NORTON, January ye 15th, 1750-51.

"To the Honble Comittee of the south Precint in Norton.

"This is to desire you to warne a south-Precint meeting to be at the meeting-House in sd. Precint, on the 21st day of this Instant January, or as soone as may be by Law, to see what the Inhabitants of sd. Precint will do in Repayering the old meeting-house, or Bulding a new House in ye same Place, or as near to the old House as may be Covenant; and to do what sd. Precint shall think Propper to be done, in order to Carey on sd. Busines.

"Benj. Cobb, Seth Smith, Timothy Briggs, John King, William Basset, Samuel Mory, Ebenezer Burt, William Cobb, Nathan Babbit, James Boldery, Juner, Seth Gilbert, Ephraim Lane, 2nd, Samuell Dean, Thomas Shepard."

At the meeting held, agreeably to the wishes of the above petitioners, on the twenty-first day of January, "they voted that they would Buld a sutabell meeting-house on the town's Land, whare the old meeting-house

stands now." Then adjourned for one week, no doubt in order to consult together about the details. On the 28th of January, at the adjournment, —

"Voted to Buld the sd. meeting-house forty feett wide and fifty feett Long, and to be twenty feet hey Between Joynts.

"Voted to Raise one hundred and sixty Pounds, Lawfull money, to buld the abovesd. meeting-house.

"Made choice of George Leonard, Sen., Capt. Simeon Wetherell, and William Coddington, to be a Committee to agree with Persons for the timber, Plank, and Bords, and other things necessary for the Bulding sd. meeting-house; and for sd. meteriels to be Ready on sd. town's Land, by ye old meeting-hous, by the first day of March, 1751-2."

Nearly a year passed away without much progress being made. On the 27th of November, 1751, the parish voted that the meeting-house should be "twenty-five [feet] stud," "sixty feet in length," and "planked and shingled on ye sides."

At an adjourned meeting, Dec. 16, the vote "respecting the Planking and shingling" the house was reconsidered; and it was decided "to stud and Board sd. Meeting-house," and that it should "be but fifty-five feet in Length."

At another adjourned meeting, Dec. 30, the decision was to have the house "sixty feet in Length."

March 17, 1752, the parish —

"Made choice of William Coddington to be Carpenter to fraime sd. meeting-house.

"Voted, that George Leonard, Esqr., Capt. William Stone, & Capt. Simeon Witherell, Thomas Morey, and William Coddington, be a Committee to take the Care and oversight of fraiming the sd. New Meeting-house, and to appoint who shall work about it, and to notify them of the times or days they shall work; and to sett the Price of Each Man's work in ye same Proportion, as near as they can, to ye Prices of the timber & stuff there is already Gott and Getting for sd. house; and also to Provide stones, and Git it under-Pind before it is Raised; and also to Provide for the Raising thereof as soon as may be, & to Git it Raised as soon as Ready.

“Voted, that notwithstanding what they have before voted Respecting the Length of sd. meeting-house, that sd. meeting-house be but fifty-five feett in Length; and that sd. Committee to order the fraiming thereof but fifty-five feet in Length.”

We presume the prospect of having a minister settled did much to stimulate them to push forward with vigor the building of the house. In building this house, the members of the parish agreed in writing, under their respective signatures, to give a certain amount of lumber and other materials needed. The value of the lumber, &c., thus contributed, was to be taken from the tax assessed upon each individual for building the house.

I have found a large number of these “Receipts Given to Gitt Timber,” a few of which we transcribe for the benefit of the curious. The first one is given entire. We omit from the others the date, and what relates to the delivering of the articles to the Building Committee.

“I, the subscriber, Promise to Gitt 4 lock-tenant Posts, 26 feet Long, Eleven inches square, and Good white-oak timber well Hewed, and deliver them to George Leonard, Simeon Wetherell, & William Codington, Committee of ye south precinct at ye old meeting-house, by ye first of March next, at Eleven Pound, old tenner Price, out of my Rates and my Mother’s. dated Dec. 5th, 1751.

“JONATHAN HODGES.”

“I promise to gitt 60 Jice, 14 feet Long, 4 and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches square, at 18 shillings a hundred feet in length; and 25 Jice, 15 feet long, $5\frac{1}{2}$ and 4 inches square, at 30 shillings, old tenner, for a hundred feet in Length; to be paid out of my and son John’s Rates.

“BENJA. COBB.”

“I Promise to Gitt five thousand of Good seeder Laths, full four feet and a halfe Long all of them, and to be full half Inch thick, and to be clear stuff, and no Knots nor hart Lathes, and to be Got out of Good stuff, noways twisting; at the Price of three Pound, old tenner, a thousand.

“JOHN KING.”

"I promise to gitt 21lb., old tenner, worth of Good Large tugh shingell nails, at twenty-five shillings, old tenner, a thousand; to be allowed out of my Rates, my father's, and Timothy Smith's Precent Rates.

"DAVID SMITH."

"I promise to Gitt 2 sills, forty feet long, 9 and 8 Inches square, to be good white oak and well Hewed; to be at 4lb., old tenner, each.

"SAML. MOREY."

"I Promise to Git 5,000 of good shingell nails, at twenty-eight shillings, old tenner, a thousand.

"WILLIAM COBB."

"I Promise to Git 1,250 Good Cedar shingells, 14 Inches Long, well shaved, and sawed square at ye But End, and no-ways winding, at ye Rate of 4lb. 10s., old tenner, a thousand, & be alowed out of my Precent Rate.

"JOSEPH ANDREWS."

"I promise to Git one thousand of Good seeder shingels, 18 Inches long, at 5£, old tenner; to be paid out of mine and my mother's Rates.

"ELIZABETH GILBERT."

"Wee Promise to geet eleven good planck, 17 feet long and 14 inches wide, all square-edged, two inches and one-quarter of an inch thick, att the price of five pound, old tenner.

"BENJAMIN COBB, Jr.
NATHAN BABBIT, Jr."

"I Promise to get 13 good Ralls for the seets for the new meeting-house, 17 feet long, three inches and half thick, and five inches deep; and five sills, 16 feet long; & inches deep, 5½; all to be att the same price yt the planck are goot for the seets.

"JONATHAN EDDY."

"I promise to Gitt 2 Beems, forty-two feet Long, twelve and teen Inches square; and four lock-tenant's Posts, to be 26 feet Long, 10 inches square; to be Good white-oake timber, well Hewed; at 19lb. 10s., old tenner, to be Paid out of my Rates, John Hodges' and Timothy Hodges' Rates.

"JOSEPH HODGES."

"I promise to Gitt 900 hundred feet of Good Oak Boards, Inch thick, Square-edged, $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, at ye Rate 10lb., old tenner, a thousand.

"THOMAS SHEPARD."

"I promise to Gitt two thousand and a quarter of good cedar shingells, at 5lb., old tenner, a 1,000, towards my Precinct Rates; and one thousand and a quarter more for Joseph Coles; all to be 18 Inches long.

"JAMES GODFREE."

"I promise to Gitt seven Hundred of Good Pitch-Pine Boards, at ye Rate of fifteen Pound a thousand; to be towards mine and my father's Rates.

"EPHRAIM WETHERELL."

Sept. 27, 1752, it was voted —

"That the Committee that were appointed for building the New Meeting-house Get the Glass, Build the Pulpit, the front of ye Galarys, and Get the stuff for ye seats, and Get the Lower floer Laid, and the Galery floers Laid, and the floer Laid suitable for ye pews to be Bult on, and window-shetters for the Lower windows on ye outside."

The approaching ordination of Mr. Palmer served to stimulate all parties in the work of erecting the house, as they were anxious to have the ordination take place in the new building. As the year 1752 drew towards a close, the meeting-house approached towards completion. Accordingly, Dec. 8, the parish —

"Voted to sell ye old meeting-house in sd. precinct, provided any person will appear to Give any thing for it that ye sd. precinct, or a Committee of sd. precinct Chosen for that purpose, shall think proper to sell it for; or to sell it at a vande, as they shall think proper, either ye whole at once, or any part thereof a time, as shall be Best; and that whoever shall purchase ye sd. Meeting-house shall move it from ye place where it now stands, in three months next after he shall purchase the same."

Capt. Simeon Wetherell, Deacon Benjamin Hodges, and Lieut. Thomas Morey, were appointed a committee to sell the house.

At an adjourned meeting, Dec. 11, it was —

“Voted, that the pew on the East side of the Pulpit, and next to the Pulpit, be a pew for ye use and Improvement of the ministry in ye sd. Precinct; and that the Minister of sd. Precinct shall have ye use and Improvement of ye same, so Long as he shall be their Minister, and no Longer.

“Voted, that ye pews in ye new meeting-house be sold, at a publick vandue, to ye highest Bidder.

“Voted, that a pew be Left, and not Sold, which Mr. Avery & his wife shall have ye use and Improvement of dureing the Pleasure of the Precinct, and no Longer; and that, when ye sd. Precinct shall see cause, may dispose of ye same.

“Then voted, that ye pew Left for ye use and Improvement of Mr. Avery and his wife, as aforesd., be ye third pew from ye East end of the pulpit.

“That the money that shall be Raised by the Sale of the sd. meeting-house shall be disposed of towards ye Building ye New Meeting-house.

“Voted, that three Seats be made in each Galery by ye Committee before appointed for ye Building sd. meeting-house; and that the seats Below, in ye old meeting-house, be Removed to ye New meeting-house by ye sd. committee, and pews made all around ye Inside of ye meeting-house, and Six Pews Behind ye Body-seats Below, and no more.

“Voted, that notwithstanding what was before voted Respecting a pew being Left for Mr. Avery and his wife, that the said pew shall be sold also to ye highest Bider with ye Rest; but that the purchaser shall not have ye Use and Improvement of ye same, so long as the sd. Precinct shall see cause to Let Mr. Avery and his wife have it as aforesd., but shall have the same when ye sd. precinct shall see cause to take ye use and Improvement thereof from the sd. Mr. Avery and wife.

“Voted, that no person that shall By a pew shall sell ye same again, without a vote of sd. Precinct for it, unless he sell his farm, & Remove out of sd. precinct.”

“DEC. 28th, 1752.

“Voted Not to have any Pews Built on ye west End of the men’s seats Below, and on the East End of the woman’s seats Below, in ye New meeting-house.

“Voted Not to have pews in the Galery of the new Meeting-house.

“Voted, that the Honor. George Leonard, Esqr., shall have the Pew Joyning to the Pulpit-stairs, in ye new meeting-house, he allowing Eighty pounds, old tener (which is equall to ten pounds, thirteen shillings, and fourpence), for it, out of what he has don towards Building sd. meeting-house, more than his rates.”

Rev. Pitt Clarke, speaking of the meeting-house, says that “the solemnities on the occasion [the ordination of Rev. Mr. Palmer, Jan. 3, 1753] were the first religious exercises in it, — the only formal dedication of the sanctuary.”

“JAN. 26th, 1753.

“Voted, that Each Person that has Bought a place for a pew in ye sd. meeting shall have Liberty to Build their Pews themselves, provided they Build them according to the direction of the Committee appointed for Building sd. meeting-house; and that they shall be allowed forty shillings for Each pew they so build; they to Provide all things needful for the Building their Respective pews.

“Voted, that the Committee aforesd. shall Lett those Persons, that shall so Build their Respective Pews, have what Boards and pieces of Boards they can spare for them, to Build sd. Pews with; Reserving only what Boards they shall want for ye Building the Minister's pew, and ye pew the said precinct have voted the use of to Mr. Avery and his wife during ye sd. Precinct Pleasure.

“Voted, that the Committee for Building sd. Meeting-house shall provide meterialls suiteable for the finishing of said Meeting-house, and Build all the seets in ye Galery, as soon as Conveniently may be.”

Then adjourned to Jan. 29. Then —

“Voted, that the Committee that were appointed for building the New Meeting-house Go on to Build ye Pew that was voted for ye use of ye minister, and ye Pew that Mr. Avery and his wife was to have ye use of dureing ye Precinct's pleasure, and the stairs up into ye Galery.”

The committee appointed to sell the pews made a report at this meeting that they had sold, to the highest bidder, “Places for the Pews in ye New Meeting-House.”

On the opposite page, we give a plan of the lower floor of the meeting-house, with the places for the pews marked out; together with the names of the purchasers, and the price that was paid for the privilege of building a pew. There was a large sounding-board over the pulpit. It was of an hexagonal form, very tastefully made of panel-work, and supported by an iron rod. A portion of this old sounding-board is still in existence, though in a somewhat decayed state.

The galleries were arranged on three sides of the house; and the seats gradually rose higher, one above the other. The cost of this house, when raised, was estimated at £101. 3s. 7½*d.* The expense of finishing the house after it was raised, till first occupied, was £218. 17s. 11½*d.*; for work subsequently done upon the house, £85. 7s. 8*d.* The whole cost, £405. 8s. 4¾*d.* It was, for many years, surrounded by large trees; but Vandalism long ago destroyed them.

May 14, 1753, "It was put to vote, whether their should be pews built in the Gallery, behind the Seats; and it passed in the negative."

A meeting was called to be on the 18th of June, 1753, "To vote what they think proper to be done with the places that are convenient to build Pews in over Each pair of the gallery-stairs, in the new meeting-house in said precinct; and also to vote whether the wiming shall have any part of the front Gallerey, and what part they shall have to sit in."

At the meeting "It was put to vote, whether the places over the gallerey-Stairs in ye new meeting-house Should be for the negroes to Set in dureing the precinct's pleasure; and it passed in the affirmative." Then the meeting was rather ungallantly dismissed, without any action relative to having "wiming" in the "front Gallerey."

Some of the elderly people who had no pew found it rather hard sitting upon the seats; and therefore were accustomed to carry chairs into the house, and occupy *them*.

GROUND-PLAN OF NEW MEETING-HOUSE IN 1753.

W E S T. — Forty feet.

N O R T H. — Fifty-five feet.

THOMAS SHAW. £4-18-8.	WILLIAM STONE. £10-0-0.	GEORGE LEONARD. £10-13-4.	Pulpit Stairs.		Rev. Mr. PALMER.	JONATHAN LINCOLN. £8-0-0.	* GEORGE MOREY. £8-8-0.	JONATHAN HODGES, 2d. £5-10-8.
Pulpit.								
Deacons' Seat.								
JAMES GODFREY. £8-13-4.								
SETH GILBERT and JOHN COBB £4-17-4.								
Door.								
JOHN WILD, jr. £5-4-0.								
JONATHAN EDDY. £7-6-8.								
Stairs to Women's Gallery.								
Stairs to Men's Gallery.								
BENJAMIN TROW. £4-2-8.								
MEN'S SEATS.								
Door.								
EBENEZER GILBERT. £3-12-0.								
GEORGE HODGES. £5-4-0.								
ELIAZER CLAPP. £6-10-8.								
NATHANIEL STONE. £8-10-8.								
GEORGE LEONARD, jr. £7-12-0.								
ISAAC HODGES. £7-1-4.								
SIMEON WETHERELL. £6-10-8.								
GEORGE MOREY, jr. £5-16-0.								
JONATHAN CLAPP, & DAVID WILLIAMS. £10-13-4.								
THOMAS MOREY. £10-13-4.								
SAMUEL MOREY. £6-8-0.								
JOSEPH HART. £6-9-4.								
Front Double Doors.								
PAUL COOK. £7-1-4.								
SAMUEL CLAPP, jr. £7-14-8.								
EDMUND HODGES. £10-13-4.								
JOHN KING. £8-18-8.								
Stairs to Men's Gallery.								
Stairs to Women's Gallery.								

E A S T.

* This is the pew reserved for Rev. Mr. AVERY and wife during the pleasure of the parish.

Nov. 28, 1753, the parish "Voted that the standing Comitte Shall take care of the meating-house, and keep it lokt; and also that theire be no chares seet in the alleys of sd. meating-house when the new seats are made Below."

A balcony, or sort of open porch, was erected over the front-door in 1765; for, on Oct. 2 of that year, the committee for finishing the meeting-house were directed "to go on, and finish the bellconey." There are those living who well remember this appendage to the house.

On the 16th of October, 1780, the parish "voted to mend the meeting-house;" and at an adjourned meeting, Jan. 1, 1781, a committee were chosen "to procure shingles and other materials for reparing the meeting-house."

Dec. 11, 1780, it was "Voted to Sell so much of the floor in the meeting-house as to make Six pews Back of the men's and women's Body of Seats, and a roe of pews in the Back of the front galery;" and it was subsequently voted, that the six pews to be built below should conform, as near as possible, to those adjoining them; and it was ordered that this pew-ground should be sold for silver money.

March 15, 1784, it was "Voted that one-third part of the front Galery be devoted for the wimen to set in, and be divided off."

Thus it will be seen that the old plan of keeping the women separate from the men was still adhered to. When the men and women learned to behave themselves, so as to be allowed to sit together, we are not informed.

Jan. 5, 1789, "Voted to sell the Ground for pews on the back-side of side-galarys, except about six or seven feet at the back-corner for negroes; and also the Ground where the negroes' Seats now are."

This pew-ground was sold, Feb. 11, 1789, at "Publick vendue," as follows, — "begining in the East Gallery, at the Northerly side:" —

		£	s.
No. 1.	Mr. Samuel Hunt	1	8
„ 2.	Mr. Isaac Hodges, jun.	1	10
„ 3.	Mr. Nathaniel Stone	3	15
„ 4.	Mr. Jonathan Newland	2	12
„ 5.	Mr. Samuel Copeland	4	1
„ 6.	Mr. Nathaniel Freeman	1	18
„ 7.	Mr. Ebenezer Wetherell	4	8
„ 8.	Capt. Ephraim Lane	4	18
„ 9.	Mr. Plyna Dean	1	18
„ 10.	Lt. Seth Smith	4	5
„ 11.	Mr. Solomon Wetherell	3	1
„ 12.	Mr. William Wetherell	5	0
„ 13.	Mr. Ebenezer Wetherell	2	13
„ 14.	Lt. Daniel Knap	2	6

March 23, 1789, “ Voted to sell so much of [the] floor of the meeting-[house] as to Make two pews at the north end of the men’s body of seats, and two pews at the East end of the women’s body of seats.”

This vote was subsequently changed, so as to have only one pew built at the east and west end of the seats.

May 14, 1792, as the parish were having candidates for settlement in the vacant pulpit, they thought it best to brush up the house a little; and therefore voted “ to paint the window-frames at present, and no more.” But, as the time of ordaining the pastor elect drew near, it was whispered round that the inside of the house needed a little attention. Accordingly, May 20, 1793, the parish “ Voted to paint the inside of the meeting-house, and whitewash the same ;” and the committee chosen for this purpose were admonished to look after the “ sills,” “ the bottom-board and corner-boards, and window-frames and doors :” all of which, we presume, was attended to in due form. At the same meeting, it was voted to sell “ Ground for two pews on the lower floor ;” and it was also decided to sell four feet in breadth, at each end of the front gallery, for two pews ; and the remainder of the front gallery was to be built, at the parish’s expense, into a

pew for the use of the singers during the pleasure of the parish.

Sept. 5, 1803, it was voted to sell pew-ground on the lower floor, on both sides of the "front alley," "where the two front-seats are;" also to sell ground for three pews on each side-gallery, at the northerly end; and likewise the ground for pews "below and above where each pare of stairs are."

Jan. 15, 1804, it was voted to make the two seats behind the new pews on the lower floor into long pews; and also to sell the ground in the side-galleries for two pews, where the seats were left for the negroes, leaving the back seats for said negroes.

Nov. 26, 1804, it was voted to sell "the alley-ways at the east and west doors for pews."

As we shall soon see, these last votes were passed in consequence of a previous vote to build a belfry at one end of the meeting-house, and a porch at the other, in which stairs were to be built leading to the gallery.

At the meeting, Nov. 26, it was ordered that the "ground where the blacks set, at the east end of the meeting-house," should be sold for pews. Thus it will be seen how the seats, both above and below, gave way to the more aristocratic pews.

At a meeting of the parish, Sept. 5, 1803, —

"Voted to build a belfry with a steple at one end of the meeting-house, and a porch at the other end of sd. meeting-house.

"Voted, that all the work of Building the sd. Belfry & porch, and repairing the meeting-house, be Completed and finished in fourteen months from this Date.

"Voted, that the meeting-house be Claboarded on the front and both ends."

Previously, it had been shingled on the outside.

Jan. 15, 1804, five hundred dollars were raised, in addition to that which was expected from the sale of pew-ground, for building the belfry, steeple, porch, &c.

In the warrant for a parish-meeting on the 25th of March, 1805, there was an article "to see if said parish will vote to purchase a bell for the meeting-house." At the meeting, they raised two hundred and thirty dollars to complete the repairs on the house, and "Voted to pass the article about the bell."

The vote to raise two hundred and thirty dollars was annulled March 31, 1806; and it was then decided to take a hundred and fifty dollars out of the fund, to pay for repairs on the meeting-house.

We find nothing more relating to a bell, on the parish-records, till March 26, 1810, when it was —

"Voted to accept of the present made to the Parish, of a bell, and give leave that said bell be hung on the meeting-house in said Parish; and that the first ringing of the bell, on Sunday mornings, be at nine O'clock."

I have been told that this bell was purchased by subscription; and I have found papers which substantiate this statement. Very soon after the vote "to pass the article about the bell," on the 25th of March, 1805, a movement was made to secure a bell by voluntary contributions, as the annexed document will show: —

"The Subscribers, takeing into Consideration the advantages that would arise in haveing a good Bell, of about 800 wt., in the meeting-house of the Congregational Parish in Norton, do, for the Purpose of Purchaseing sd. Bell, agree & Promise to pay the sum we set to our names, Provided a sum sufficient shall be subscribed for that Purpose.

"The money to be paid to a Committee appointed by the majority of the subscribers to receive the same and to purchase sd. Bell.

"JUNE 7th, 1805.

"George Leonard, Fifty Dollars; Laban Wheaton, twenty Dollars; Lysander Makepeace, Seven Dollars; Jacob Shepherd, ten Dollars."

The project did not meet the favor of the people generally; and hence, for a time, was abandoned. But, in a few years, it was revived. Here is the proof: —

"JANUARY, 1810.

"As the above subscription did not obtain, we who have subscribed this agree to pay the sum affixed to our names for the purpose above mentioned; viz., to procure a meeting-house Bell for the Congregational Society in Norton, over which the Rev. Mr. Clarke is now a settled minister."

As an inducement for people to subscribe towards the bell, the following obligation was entered into by the pastor of the parish:—

"As some persons are willing to subscribe for a Bell only on the condition they can be free from the expense of ringing it, I hereby obligate myself, for my part, to be at the expense of ringing it on Sabbath & Lecture days, so long as I am allowed the surplus of the Parish Fund, as I have been some time past. Tho' this may be more than my equal proportion, I am willing to do it to encourage what would contribute so much to the honor of the Parish, & to the convenience & utility of those who are the united members of it.

"JAN., 1810.

"PITT CLARKE."

To this paper are attached the names of twenty-seven persons, whose subscriptions ranged from one to twenty dollars; the whole amount being sixty-six dollars and fifty cents. But, as we have been unable to find the names of the other subscribers, we shall not publish the above twenty-seven.

We have found the bill of purchase; from which it appears that the bell was bought at Boston, March 30, 1810, of Paul Revere and Son; that its "nett weight" was eight hundred and seventy-five pounds; and that it cost forty-two cents per pound, or three hundred and sixty-seven dollars and fifty cents. For some needed fixtures, there were paid six dollars and thirty cents; making the whole cost three hundred and seventy-three dollars and eighty cents.

The makers of the bell entered into the following agreement with the purchasers: "If it Breaks within one year, and judges say the cause was in the manufacture, we agree to make it good."

I am told that "a yoke," on which to hang the bell, was procured: but, not being very suitable, an attempt was made to purchase another of the Misses Woodward, who lived in the southerly part of the town; but they would not sell it. Some persons, however, determined to have it at any rate; and therefore went and cut the tree, and carried off what was needed, leaving the other yoke instead; and justified themselves for the act on the ground that "exchange was no robbery." No one can doubt, however, that it was a rather questionable proceeding.

We have found a bill of articles furnished "the Committee for Purchasing the Bell," by George Gilbert; and among the items were a quarter-gallon of West-India rum, a quarter-gallon of cherry, and one-eighth gallon of brandy. We presume these articles were needed as help to raise the bell into the belfry.

This was the same bell that now belongs to the Congregational parish.

It was the practice of the early settlers of the country to build their meeting-houses without means of warming them, either by fireplaces or stoves. Why they did so, we are unable to say; but it will be obvious to every one, that it must have been a pretty severe penance for the sins committed during the week, to be obliged to sit on a cold winter's day, in an unwarmed house, and listen to the long sermons of those times. Many of the gentler sex, who could not so well endure the icy atmosphere of the house as their more hardy lords, obviated the difficulty somewhat by carrying with them to the house of God little "foot-stoves," filled with coals. Even with these helps to keep the temperature of the body above the freezing-point, there was, no doubt, much suffering from the piercing cold. Few, we fear, would be the worshippers of either sex at the present day in an unwarmed house of prayer.

When the proposition came, as it did at last, to introduce some warming apparatus into the sanctuary, it met with a strong opposition from some who, for

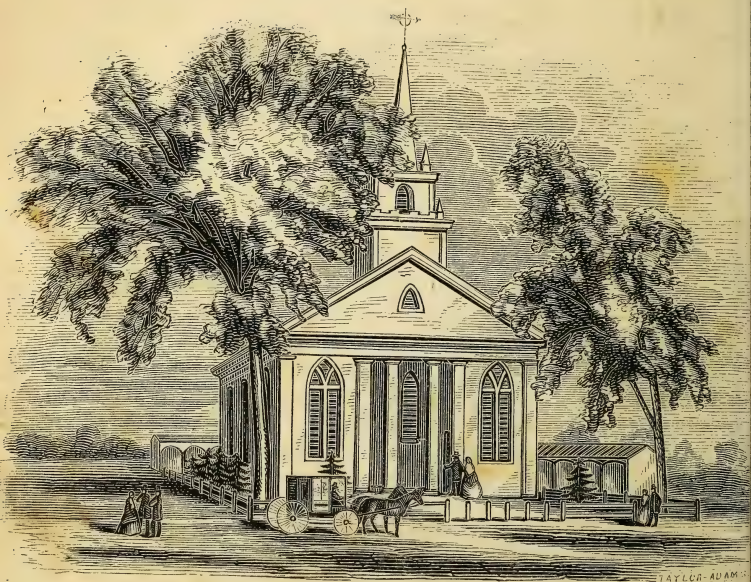
years, had shivered through the sermons of many a freezing Sunday. But the car of progress is ever onward, and finally triumphant. The year 1818 is memorable in the annals of Norton as the year when the people submitted to the monstrous innovation of warming the meeting-house. In January of that year, a subscription-paper was started, headed by the venerable Judge Leonard,—then verging upon his ninetieth year,—to purchase stoves for the meeting-house. The subscriptions varied from five dollars to twenty-five cents. The number of subscribers was sixty-seven, and the amount raised was eighty-four dollars and twenty-five cents. On the 5th of February, 1818, two stoves were bought of Joseph Howe for twenty-seven dollars. He was also paid, for two hundred and forty-three feet of funnel, and other articles needed about the stoves, forty-five dollars and forty-seven cents; making the whole amount for stoves and fixtures, seventy-two dollars and forty-seven cents. The remainder of the money was used to purchase wood, and to pay for making the fires, &c.

After having enjoyed the luxury of a warm house one Sunday, no one has since been anxious to go back to the good old time when the penitential tears would freeze in their journey down the repentant's cheek before the altar of God.

Having made the inside of the house comfortable, the parish think it best to have the outside respectable; and therefore, on the 21st of June, 1819, three hundred dollars were raised to paint and repair the meeting-house and belfry. This proved to be the last brushing-up the house received from the hands of the parish.

After the lapse of a few years, various causes conspired to make a new house desirable. The venerable pastor, who for forty years had broken the bread of life, and taught, by precept and example, the living truths that fell from the lips of Jesus, took a deep interest in this movement. On the thirty-first day of March, 1834, a committee was appointed to ascertain what repairs the old house needed, and what would be





Congregational Meeting-House. Erected 1835.

the cost of a new one. The committee made a report on the 28th of May following: and, on that day, the parish "voted to remove to a new Meeting-house to worship, provided there should be one built in the manner proposed; that is, put into shares." A committee was also chosen to see how many shares could be disposed of.

At an adjourned meeting, Sept. 27, 1834, these votes, and several others subsequently passed relating to a new house, were rescinded. It was then —

"Moved and Voted, that this Parish build a new Meeting-house by the sale of the Pews and individual donation, & set it on the ground gratuitously offered by Mrs. Peddy Bowen, according to her direction, near the front of this house; and said house shall be for the use of the Congregational Incorporated society of which the Rev. Pitt Clarke is the present Minister, or his successor in office. 28 for, 6 against."

Mrs. Bowen not only gave the land whereon to set the new house, but also gave "all the timber for it, on the condition that it should be cut and carried from her land according to her particular direction." At the meeting, Sept. 27, 1834, the parish voted that the cost of the house should "not exceed four thousand dollars." They also chose John Sweet, Daniel Lane, Cromwell Leonard, Leonard Hodges, jun., and Elisha Crossman, a Building Committee. It was subsequently directed that the house should be sixty-two feet long and forty-two wide; and Oliver Clapp and Earl Hodges were added to the Building Committee.

During the summer of 1835, the house was built, in part, after the plan of a house at Ipswich. The pulpit is at the entrance-end of the house; the singing-seats at the opposite end; and a narrow gallery on each side, originally with one row of seats in the front of it (which were taken down in 1847), and a walk in the back part, leading from the entrance-end of the house to the singing-seats. The house was dedicated to the worship of the one living and only true God, Dec. 23, 1835.

The following account of the dedicatory services we copy from the "Christian Register" of Jan. 9, 1836 : —

"On Wednesday, Dec. 23rd, the new and beautiful Church erected for the use of the First Congregational Society in Norton was solemnly dedicated to the public worship of Almighty God. The services on this occasion were as follows: Introductory prayer by Rev. Mr. Sweet, of Kingston; Reading of the Scriptures by Rev. Mr. Bridge, of Cambridge; Dedicatory prayer by Rev. Mr. Bigelow, of Taunton; Sermon by Rev. Mr. Hall, of Providence; concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Sayward, of Mansfield."

The number of pews in the house was sixty. Fifty-six of these were sold at auction on the 24th of December, 1835, for three thousand seven hundred and two dollars and fifty cents. As the house drew near its completion, the disposal of the old house became a matter of interest.

Nov. 16, 1835, the parish voted to have the old meeting-house appraised by a disinterested committee, and to sell it at public vendue. Samuel Crocker of Taunton, Zeba Bliss of Attleborough, and Simeon Green of Mansfield, were chosen to appraise the old house; and it was subsequently sold to the town for a town-house.

In the year 1836, a chain-fence was erected around the meeting-house, and remained for some years. In 1850, the present fence, with iron rails and stone posts, was erected; and a row of seventeen evergreen-trees set out inside of the fence around the house, and the walk made from the fence up to the front-end of the house.

But little change has been made in the house since its erection. In August, 1854, the inside of the house was repainted, the pews were grained, the pulpit lowered about one-half its previous height, the house newly carpeted, and a sofa and chairs purchased for the pulpit, &c.; and the expense of the same was paid by the ladies of the parish.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MINISTERIAL FUND, AND INCORPORATION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL PARISH.

"This originated in the pious forethought of our fathers of the Plymouth Colony."

P. CLARKE.

IN order to lay the foundation for the permanent support of the ministry, the God-loving and God-fearing proprietors of the Taunton North Purchase conceived the idea of setting apart a portion of their lands for such a purpose. Accordingly, at a meeting of the North-Purchase proprietors, "Jan. 27, 1684-5, it was voted and agreed [to] Lay out a lot, in the most convenient place, ffor the use of the ministry, — A Lot, Equal with one of our own, and Equal priviledges through the Whole purchase, never to be Allianated from the use of the ministry."¹ This vote was soon after carried into effect, and one hundred acres of upland and eight of meadow were laid out; but, for some reason, — perhaps because they anticipated the division of the North Purchase into two or more towns, — on the 6th of March, 1698-9, the proprietors voted —

"That the lot for the ministry aready pitched upon shall be let ffall, and one-halfe of it layed out nearer to Bridgewater, and the other halfe nearer to Chartley Ironworks;² both where the Committee, with advise, shall Judg most Convenient."

This vote was not at once carried into effect. Hence, on July 2, 1700, they ordered that the ministry-lot should be laid out in the two parts already spoken of,

¹ North-Purchase Records, p. 9.

² These were at the Judge Leonard estate.

and one hundred acres more should be added to it. May 25, 1721, the vote was re-affirmed, that one-half of the ministerial land should be laid out towards the west end, and the other half towards the east end, of the North Purchase, "both in future and latter divisions." Lieut. Nicholas White, Ensign George Leonard, and John Smith, for the west end; John Phillips, Thomas Randall, and Josiah Keith, for the east end, — were appointed a committee to lay it out. From the records, it appears that, up to October, 1744, there had been set apart for the ministry four hundred and fifty-three acres of land; but, heretofore, no use had been made of it, except that Rev. Mr. Avery had cut off some timber, and used it in the building of his house. In 1747, a petition was sent to the Proprietors' Committee asking that a meeting might be called —

"To see if the Proprietees will give the Lands Layed out in the said Proprietees for the use of the ministree, to be disposed of by the town of Norton and Easton Respectively for the support of a Presbeterian or Congregationell ministry. The town of Easton have a mind to build thereon, and Improve sd. lands lying in sd. townships."¹

The meeting was held Dec. 14, 1747; but was forthwith adjourned to March 15, 1748. A committee was then appointed to view the lands, and report at the next meeting what was best to be done to make the lands most advantageous to the two towns for the support of the ministry."² No report of this committee is to be found.

In the warrant for a meeting, April 2, 1753, were articles to see about dividing the lands between Norton and Easton, and to divide the moiety set off to Norton between the two precincts of that town; and also to determine for the maintenance of what ministers they should be improved. The proprietors vote to divide the lands equally between the towns of Norton and Easton; that the half-share belonging to Norton should

¹ North-Purchase Records, p. 76.

² Ibid. p. 77.

be equally divided between the two precincts; and that the —

“Part of sd. lands which shall fall to Norton South Precinct shall always be and Remaine to the use of the ministry of said Precinct, to which the North-Purchase Lands, which Leyeth between the Line of the town of Attleborough and the Line of Taunton old Township, shall belong to.”

They then declare, that —

“Whereas our Predecessors, who voted and sett sd. Land appart for the ministry, ware of and Belonged to those Churches which ware then called and Known by the name of Congregationell Churches, and we apprehend it was their Desire and intent that the above-mentioned Land should be Improved for the maintaining of the ministers of those Churches which shall be of those Prinsepells; tharefore we now vote, that the whole of the abovesd. Lands shall be Improved for the maintaining of the ministers of the severall Congregationell Churches which belong to the said towns as above mentioned, and be Improved for that end only.”¹

The division of lands having been made, the South Precinct, at a meeting held March 29, 1756, chose Col. George Leonard, Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, and Lieut. Thomas Morey, a committee to take care of their part, and “to see that there be no damage done on said Land by cutting timber or any other way.” The land, however, in its unimproved state, was not very available property for the payment of ministerial charges; and therefore, at a precinct-meeting, Jan. 16, 1758, Jonathan Lincoln, Benjamin Cobb, and Thomas Morey, were chosen a committee to make report, at a future meeting, “what is best for the South Precinct to do concerning said Land.”

We find no record of their report. The precinct held a meeting, Dec. 21, 1761, and declared that —

“These Lands mostly lye in the North Precinct of sd. town of Norton, and so far from the sd. South Precinct that

¹ North-Purchase Records, p. 84.

they can never be of but Little or no advantage Towards maintaining the ministry of the South precinct in Said town of Norton, and no Improvement made on said Land yett. Therefore the Said precinct Now voted, that Thomas Morey, Esqr., shall be Impowered, in behalf of said precinct, To petition to the great and general Court of this province, That they would Impower or Ennable said first precinct of The town of Norton, or such other persons as sd. Court shall Appoint and Impower, to Sell all the sd. precinct's ministerial lands above mentioned, for the most said Lands will fetch; and the money that shall Be Raised by the sale of sd. Lands to be Lett out to Interest as sd. court Shall order; the Interest only to be applyed yearly towards the maintaining the ministry of sd. precinct For ever; which, we apprehend, will be as agreeable to the good Intent and meaning of the proprietors who gave sd. Lands as to Lett the Lands Lye, and more for the Interest of sd. precinct."¹

In obedience to the trust confided in him, Mr. Morey knocked at the door of the General Court, Jan. 18, 1762, with his petition, asking that the wishes of the precinct may be gratified. The court promptly granted the power asked for. Here is the evidence:²—

"In the house of Representatives, January 23d, 1762, Read and Ordered, that the Prayer be so far Granted, as that the South Precinct in the town of Norton, by a Committee by them to be appointed for that purpose, be Impowered to make Sale of the Land mentioned in the Petition, for the most the same will fetch; and to make a Good Deed or Deeds in Law for Conveying the Same. the Proceeds of the Said Sale to be Let out at Interest, on Good Security, to be Improved annually towards the Support of a Congregational minister in Said Precinct, in the same way and manner as the Rents of Said Land would have been Improved if it had not been disposed of.

"Sent up for Concurrence.

"JAMES OTIS, Speaker.

"In Council, January 28, 1762. — Read and Concurred.

"JNO. COTTON, Dep. Secty.

"Consented to:

"IRA BERNARD."

¹ Parish Records, book i. p. 98, &c. ² Ibid. p. 127.

No progress was, however, made towards the sale of the land, till after the incorporation of the North Precinct into the District of Mansfield. March 21, 1774, the town vote that the committee lately chosen for that purpose make sale of the ministerial land lying in Mansfield, and belonging to Norton, "as soon as conveniently may be for the interest of said town." That "convenient season" did not come at once; for, Nov. 17, 1777, the town vote to sell their ministerial land lying in Mansfield at public vendue, and discharged from further service a former committee chosen for that purpose. They also chose Seth Smith, Isaac Hodges, and John King, to attend to the matter; who, Jan. 1, 1778, were empowered to act in conjunction with a similar committee from Mansfield, to divide the lands belonging to the two towns, and establish the bounds. The division having been made,¹ these lands, — a part lying near Mansfield Meeting-house, and now crossed lengthwise by the Taunton-Branch Railroad, and a part on "Dorchester Plain" so called, — amounting to about one hundred and fifty acres, were sold, in four lots, to John Pratt, George Cobb, Isaac Smith, and Samuel Hunt, for £1,059. 17s. 9d. On the fourteenth day of December, 1778, George Leonard, Esq., was chosen by the town to receive the money from the committee. On Monday, 8th of March following, a committee was raised to consider in what manner the money could be best deposited "for the benefit of the Congregational society in Norton." They report, May 26, that "the method they should have chose" was, at that time, "attended with some difficulty; and therefore recommend that Dea. Benja. Copeland, Dea. Benja. Pearson, and Dea. Daniel Dean, be impowered to receive the money, and put the whole into the Continental Loan office in their own name;" they giving a receipt to the town-clerk for the same. This report was accepted.²

The fund thus created was increased by adding the

¹ See Parish-Records, p. 129, &c.

² Ibid. pp. 132 and 133.

interest thereto, and by the proceeds resulting from the sale of "pew-ground" in the meeting-house, till, in a few years, the interest was sufficient to pay the salary of the minister; and it continued to do so till the death of Rev. Pitt Clarke in 1835.

By good financial management, this fund is still available for the payment of ministerial services, and essentially lightens the taxes that would otherwise fall somewhat heavily upon the parish possessing it.

INCORPORATION OF THE PARISH.

It is probable that the disposition made of the money in 1779 was attended with some difficulties; and hence there was a society-meeting called on the 6th of January, 1783, "To choose a committee to petition the General Court to Incorporate sd. Society, so that they may legally act with regard to their ministerial money, or any other matter that concerns sd. society." At the meeting, Capt. Isaac Hodges was chosen agent to forward to the General Court a petition for an act of incorporation; and five trustees were chosen to take care of the money. The prayer of the society was answered, as the annexed document will show:—

"An Act¹ to incorporate the Congregational Society in the town of Norton into a distinct Parish, and also to incorporate a Committee of the said Society for certain purposes.

"Whereas the Congregational society in the town of Norton, of which the Reverend Joseph Palmer is the present minister, have represented to this Court that the said society are possessed of a sum of money and securities to the amount of four hundred and twenty-five pounds, which they desire to improve to the purpose of beginning and laying a foundation for a fund, the interest whereof to be appropriated to support a learned, pious, Protestant, Congregational minister in the said society for ever, and for building or repairing a meeting-house in said society; and have supplicated this Court by a

¹ Passed March 4, 1783. (See Massachusetts Special Laws, vol. i. p. 44, &c.)

law to invest the said society with all the powers, privileges, and immunities that precincts or parishes in this Commonwealth do or may enjoy: And also that certain persons, by them, the said society, elected and named, may be made a body corporate, with sufficient powers to receive the aforesaid sum, and other donations that are or shall be made for the purposes aforesaid, and for the well-ordering the same: —

“SECT. 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That the Congregational society in the town of Norton, in the county of Bristol, where the Reverend Joseph Palmer now officiates, be, and they hereby are, incorporated into a distinct parish, by the name of the ‘Congregational Parish in Norton;’ and hereby are invested with all the powers, privileges, and immunities that precincts or parishes within this Commonwealth do or may by law enjoy. And that it may be known at any time who of the inhabitants of the said town belong to the said parish, —

“SECT. 2. Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all those inhabitants of the said Norton, who usually attend public worship with the aforesaid society, shall be deemed and taken to belong to the said parish, to all intents and purposes, until they shall signify in writing, under their hands, to the Clerk of the said parish, their intention to attend public worship with some other religious society, and shall actually attend. Provided, nevertheless, That all parishioners so removing shall be held to pay all arrears of taxes legally assessed on them by the said parish before their removal.

“SECT. 3. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That George Leonard, Esq., be, and he hereby is, fully authorized to issue his warrant, directed to some principal inhabitant belonging to the said parish, requiring him to give notice to the inhabitants of the parish aforesaid, qualified to vote in parish-affairs, to assemble at some suitable time and place in the said parish, to choose all such officers as parishes are by law required to choose in the month of March annually; and to transact such other matters and business as is necessary to be done in the said parish.

“SECT. 4. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That George Leonard, William Homes, Daniel Dean, Isaac Hodges, and Israel Trow, chosen, elected, and named by the said society for that purpose, and their successors hereafter chosen by the parish aforesaid in the manner as in

and by this Act is hereafter provided, shall be, and hereby are, declared to be a body corporate, by the name of 'The Trustees of the Congregational Parish in Norton,' and hereby are incorporated to this special purpose: viz., To receive all the donations, subscriptions, securities, and monies now in the hands of the said society, and also such grants, appropriations, and donations, either real or personal, that have been or shall hereafter be made for the purposes aforesaid; provided the whole sum do not exceed the sum of three thousand pounds. And all such sum or sums as shall be received by the aforesaid present Trustees, or their successors in the said trust, shall be, and hereby are, appropriated to raise an income by the annual interest arising therefrom for the purpose aforesaid.

"SECT. 5. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all bonds, mortgages, or other lawful securities, made to the said George Leonard, William Homes, Daniel Dean, Isaac Hodges, and Israel Trow, and their successors in the said trust, are hereby declared good and valid: And the said Trustees and their successors, by their said corporate name, may sue and be sued, and are hereby fully authorized by themselves, or by their agents or attornies, to appear, plead, and defend, in any action or suit brought by or against them in their said capacity, and the same prosecute to final judgment and execution, in any Court proper to try and determine the same.

"SECT. 6. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the aforesaid sum of four hundred and twenty-five pounds, and all such further sum or sums as may hereafter be annexed thereto, shall be by the said Trustees put to interest; and the annual interest arising therefrom shall be further put to interest, and so from year to year until a capital shall be raised, the annual interest whereof shall be sufficient to support a minister as aforesaid; and then the annual interest of the said increased capital, or so much thereof as the said corporation shall find necessary, shall for ever after be paid to such minister resident and officiating in the work of the ministry among said society within said town. And if it shall ever happen that there be no such minister settled within the said society, then, in every such case, the interest arising in such vacation shall be improved to supply the said society with preaching. And, if there shall be any surplusage, it shall be put to interest on new securities, and

added to the said capital, and improved for the building or repairing a meeting-house for the said society; and all such increased sum or sums shall be ordered and disposed of by the said Trustees according to the directions hereinbefore provided respecting the said capital.

“SECT. 7. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if at any time the income arising by the annual interest of the fund aforesaid shall be more than sufficient for the purposes aforesaid, — in that case, all such surplus shall, and hereby is, specially appropriated, and shall be improved by the parish aforesaid, towards the support and maintenance of a school for the benefit of said society.

“SECT. 8. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the said parish, at their annual meeting in March, from time to time be, and hereby are, fully authorized to choose five Trustees for the year ensuing.

“SECT. 9. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if at any time the said parish shall, at their annual meeting in March, neglect, or by any means be prevented, choosing Trustees, — in every such case, the Trustees last chosen shall continue vested with all the powers and privileges aforesaid until others be chosen.

“SECT. 10. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the said Trustees, and their successors from time to time, shall be accountable to the said parish, and may be by them, for any misdemeanor or failure in their said trust, removed therefrom; in which case, and also in case of death or other removal of any one or more of them, it shall and may be lawful for the said parish to appoint others in their room. And the said parish may at any time call a meeting for that purpose accordingly.”

In four days after this Act was approved by the Governor, a warrant was issued by George Leonard to Silas Cobb, to notify a meeting for the purpose of organizing by choosing all proper officers required by the Act. George Leonard was chosen moderator; Silas Cobb, clerk; and Seth Smith, jun., treasurer. The same trustees were chosen as were mentioned in the Incorporation Act. “Voted, that the Trustees should call in the money now outstanding due to sd. parish.” — “Voted, that the sd. Trustees shall lay

out sd. money for public securities as soon as may be.”

After a few years’ time, it was deemed proper to make an addition to the Act of Incorporation; and, upon application of the parish to the General Court for that purpose, the following additional Act was passed June 17, 1797:¹—

“SECT. 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That the said parish be, and hereby are, authorized and empowered, at any legal meeting thereof, to be holden in the month of March annually, to choose some suitable person to be Treasurer for the Trustees of the said parish; and the person so chosen shall give bond, at the discretion of the said Trustees, for the faithful performance of his duty.

“SECT. 2. And be it further enacted, That the Treasurer (for the time being) chosen and qualified as aforesaid shall be empowered to receive, for the use of the said parish, all monies and securities for money belonging to said parish; any thing in the act to which this is in addition to the contrary notwithstanding.”

No further change was made, so far as we can learn, till after the death of Rev. Pitt Clarke; when it was found, that, in order to settle a minister, he must be paid a salary larger than the interest of the fund would amount to: and hence, on the twenty-eighth day of December, 1835, after inviting Rev. Mr. Bridge to settle with them as their minister, the parish voted “to petition the Legislature for an act of Amendment in their act of Incorporation.” A petition, signed by the Parish Committee, was sent to the General Court, stating the facts in the case, and asking that they might have the privilege of using the interest of the fund towards the support of the minister, though it was not sufficient to pay his whole salary. The prayer was granted as follows:—

¹ Massachusetts Special Laws, vol. ii. p. 164.

"Be it enacted, &c., The annual interest of the fund belonging to the 'Congregational Parish in Norton' may be appropriated by the said parish toward the support of their minister, and for supplying the said parish with preaching, although the same may not be sufficient for the support of a minister; any thing contained in the act to which this is in addition notwithstanding.¹

"Approved March 11, 1836."

This fund now amounts to something more than seven thousand dollars; a portion of which is invested in bank-stock, and the rest is loaned on personal security. I am told that the fund in Easton and Mansfield has become very much reduced from its original amount.

CHAPTER XIX.

COMMON SCHOOLS.

"'Twas nobly done, to make the schoolhouse free." — C. T. CONGDON.

WITHIN a few years after the incorporation of the town, and the settlement of a minister to look after the spiritual interests of the young, their intellectual culture was provided for by the establishment of public schools. The first recorded action of the town relative to schools was April 28, 1719, when —

"The town made chois of Thomas Skinner, Sen., to Be thare Scoolmaster, and to beginn at ye first day of June, 1719, and to continu one quarter; and his salary not to Exceed two pounds for said quarter."

It is probable, however, that some private instruction had been given previous to this date. For some years

¹ See Special Laws, vol. vii. p. 579.

after the establishment of public schools, the town, in their corporate capacity, chose the schoolmaster. In some instances, however, they delegated power to the selectmen to contract with the teacher, and make the necessary arrangements for the opening of the school; yet, for more than eighty years after the organization of the town, there were no schoolhouses specially erected for that purpose. The early settlers felt themselves too poor, and had too many difficulties and obstacles to contend with, to furnish the means or find the time to erect separate houses for the instruction of the young. In very many instances, they were obliged to "kill two birds with one stone." Hence private houses, carpenters' shops, &c., were more or less used for school purposes. Probably, in the centre of the town, the meeting-house, in the summer season, was converted *pro tempore* into a "temple of science." I am informed by a native of this town (Rev. Isaac Braman of Georgetown, born in 1770), that, in his boyhood-days, —

"The schools generally were kept in private houses. I once went to school in a Carpenter's shop, in which the work-bench was used for a table. In the study of Arithmetic, no scholar was allowed a book. The teacher would give him a sum; and he might sit and study upon it until he had found an answer, which would sometimes occupy several days."

And, in almost every other respect, there was a like deficiency in books.¹ Hence, of necessity, much of the instruction was oral, and less mechanical, than at the present day, even if it was given in a mechanic's shop. Mr. Braman says, "The great object," in those days, "was to procure cheap teachers," — an idea by far too prevalent at this day; yet there was far more excuse for this idea a century ago than now.

How cheaply the first teachers of Norton were procured, will at once be seen by a reference to the price

¹ "In my early days," says Mr. Braman, "no book was used in school, except the Bible and Spelling-book. There were respectable aged persons who could not read."

paid them. I have been informed by some elderly people, that most of the early schools were established for boys; it being thought almost entirely unnecessary that girls should be educated. As they were not expected to cast interest, or engage largely in any business transactions, it was not deemed important that they should be sent to school. Their husbands — if they had any — were considered the proper guardians of their interests; and therefore, if they learned any thing, it must be in patience and meekness of their husbands at home. Hence, for many years after public schools were established, there were no female teachers. Of course, if they knew nothing themselves, they could teach nothing to others.

The first record I find of a female teacher, or "schoolmistress," as she was called, is in 1791, when an order was drawn to pay Patience Leach for teaching eight weeks, at three shillings per week. Jonathan Hunt boarded the "schoolmistress" eight weeks that year, at three shillings per week; and hence it is presumed she taught in his District, No. 7. Deacon Daniel Lane informed me that he knew Miss Leach, and said she belonged to Easton; and was of the opinion that she married a Mr. Bird, and died, not many years ago, at Taunton.

The next year (1792), Abigail Morey taught school three months, — probably in the Centre District, as she boarded at Col. Silas Cobb's. She subsequently taught other schools in town.

The board of male teachers, between the years 1719 and 1800, ranged from four to sixteen shillings per week; the latter amount, no doubt, being paid when the currency was somewhat depreciated. As the population of the town was at first quite sparse, it is highly probable that there were but few children within its limits, — possibly not more than enough for one good school, if all could have been collected into one room. But, as all could not attend at one place, the school was kept from time to time in different parts

of the town, so as to better accommodate all, as will appear from the following records:—

“May 13, 1720. — The town made choice of Jeremiah Bassett for to be Scoolmaster; &, accordingly, he have agreed & excepted of the same for one quarter of a year, after the Rate of thirty pounds Per year, — one-third money, the other two-thirds other pay. first beginning at the public meeting-house, the scool to be moving, If continued the other part of the year. the second quarter [to be] at that part of the town called Scottlin; & the third quarter taking in Tiump’s & White’s and Skinner’s naiborhood; and the fourth quarter at Winnaconick.”

This practice of “moving” the school, as it was termed, continued for several years, — most probably till the town was districted.

“Aug. 14, 1721. — At a towne-meeting Legally warned [for that purpose], chose Jeremiah Basset to be Schoole-master to Keep Schoole in sd. towne one year next enceuing; and sd. Basset is to have thirty Pounds in ye Produce of ye town, at the Price allready Sett.”

June 20, 1723, at a legal town-meeting, it was —

“Voted that Simeon Wetherell shall be schoolmaster to keep school at his father’s or his one house, to teech children to Reed, Right, and Cifer, for one quarter of a year next after the Last of august next; and the selectmen shall agree with sd. Wetherell for his service, and he is to be Paid in ye Produce of ye towne. Sd. Wetherell shall Keep School at but one of the Places all sd. quarter. And sd. Wetherel Excepted of his being Schoollmaster on sd. terms.”

In looking at the record, it would seem, that, in addition to teaching the children “to Reed, Right, and Cifer,” the teacher might profitably have spent his “noonings,” at least, in teaching the recorder of the above vote how to spell; yet, in charity to the town-clerk, we should remember how exceedingly limited were the educational privileges of that day.

“Jan. 6, 1723 or 4, voted that the selectmen shall Go forthwith and agree with Othnial Cambell, of Taunton, to

Keep Schooll in Norton for one quarter of a year now following; and, if he cannot be had, then to Geet some other Sutable Persone to Keep School sd. quarter of a year."

At a legal town-meeting, July 13, 1724,—

"They voted that the scholl shall be Kept ye next quarter in that part of the towne which Goes by the name of Winecunet."

"Sept. 14, 1724. — Voted to pay Mr. John Sumner, for Keeping School, £11—8—0.

"Oct. 12, 1724. — Thay made choice of William Caswell to be our Schollmaster, to Keep Scholl in the towne of Norton one year next Enseuing; and that he shall have thirty-four Pounds, in currant money of sd. Province, for his wages to Keep scholl sd. year; and the sd. Towne of Norton to be at no more cost Consarning his Being Bored sd. year. Provided, allso, that he shall move in Keeping Scholl as the Towne shall agree. and thay made choice of Mr. John Hodges to go and agree with sd. William Caswell to Keep scholl in ye town.

"Dec. 30, 1724. — 2ly, They voted that the Schollmaster shall Keep Scholl, the first quarter of a year, at the house of Eliezer fisher; and the second quarter at the house of Left. Nicholas White; and the third quarter at Winecunit, or in that Part of the town; and the Last quarter at the meeting-House.

"March 29, 1727. — Voted that Josiah Briggs shal be schollmaster to Keep Scholl in Norton, . . . Provided he will Keep scholl for 20lb. a year, and his dyett; and that he shall Keep Scholl, the first quarter, at ye middle of the towne; and the second quarter at Winecunett; and the third quarter on the south side of ye way which is towards Elezer fisher's; and the fourth quarter at Left. White's, or theyrabouts.

"Nov. 30, 1727. — Voted to pay John Briggs, ye eldist, for dyeting of the Schollmaster 14 weeks, at 6s. a week, 04lb.—04s.—0d.

"Sept. 20, 1731. — Voted to Samuel Vesey, for Diating ye Scollemaster, 2—05—0.

"Sept. 18, 1733. — Voated to Joseph Hodges, for bording the Scollemaster, Mr. Bacon, ye sum of 01—16—0.

"It was voated to Joseph Hodges, for carring & fetching sd. colemaster, ye sum of 0—14—0.

"It was voated to Daniell Braman, for Keeping the scoll-master fower weaks, at Eight shillind pur weake. it came to 01—12—0.

"Voated to Samuel Clap, for treating with the collmaster, the sum of 00—03—00.

"Aug. 31, 1736. — Voated that the Selectmen shuld hire a scoolemaster.

"Sept. 28, 1736. — Voted to Mr. Samuel Clap, the 1, for to pay to Scoolemaster Vesey, the sum of 5—1—0.

[Also] "voated, that what is wanting for sculling for this presant year, and for the pore, is to be dran out of the present treasury.

"May 14, 1742. — Theyr was a voate called for to Know whether the Scoole shuld be Kept on the west sid of the teen-mile River, in said Preesent; and it past in the afirmative.

"Nov. 1742. — Voated to Capt. Hodges, for carying the Scoolmaster to Cambridge, 01—05—0.

"Nov. 27, 1751. — Voted that the Selectmen agree with Deacon John Briggs to Keep School, provided they can agree with him on Reasonable Conditions."

He probably kept; for, the next year, the town voted him sixteen shillings "for bording himself when he kept school."

"Dec. 30, 1751. — Voted to Ephraim Leonard, Esq., for Boarding ye schoolmaster $6\frac{1}{2}$ weeks, and feching him from Concord, £11—00—0, old Tenor; £1—9—4, Lawful money.

"Nov. 21, 1755. — Voted to Capt. William Stone, for boarding of the Schoolmaster, Stephen Farrow (Farrar?), £2—12—0."

Mr. Farrar probably belonged to that part of Concord which is now Lincoln. The same day, —

"Voted to Daniel Braman, for boarding Samuel Dean, Jun., Schoolmaster, £2—08."

This was probably he who was afterwards the Rev. Dr. Deane, of Portland, Me.

There is every reason to believe that most of the teachers heretofore mentioned belonged to Norton.

About this time, the number of children had so far increased as to require some other arrangement than

that of moving the school from one part of the town to another. The course that had been pursued must have been attended with many difficulties and inconveniences, and hence earnestly called for a change. Whether for good or evil, a different course of proceeding was determined upon by the town. We can hardly expect there was entire unanimity in the measure; but on Jan. 16, 1758, the town "voted to Divide the school, that is to be heereafter kept in this town, into nine quarters." The North Precinct, or what is now Mansfield, was to have one-third of the districts, or "Quarters," as they were then called.

A committee of three in the North Precinct, and another of eight in the South Precinct, were appointed to divide the town into quarters; and were directed to report to the said town, at the next March meeting, where the said quarters of the school should be kept, &c. The committee of the South Precinct attended to their duty, and reported March 20; and it was "voted to Except of the Division of the School Ground." The committee report as follows:—

"Firstly, we set of the center Quarter, to begin at Mr. Ichabod Washburn's, takeing in said Washburn; then Ranging and Takeing in Mr. Noah Wiswall; then Ranging so as to Take in David Williams, on Medfield Rhoad; then on medfield Rhoad, takeing in all the houses on said Rhoad, Including Mr. Timothy Briggse's house; then Runing so as to take in Josiah vining and Timothy Smith and John Hall's houses; then to the Line which is Between the North and South precinct in sd. Norton; then Runing on the precinct-Line to the line Between the north purches and the old-township proprietors; then on the sd. line untill it comes To Chartly mill-pond; then on a Straight Line to whare we first began.

"2dly, We set of the Second Quarter Begining at makepeace's mill; then Runing So as to take in John Patten's house; then Runing so as to Take in the widdow Barney's house and Jonathan Clap's house, to Easton line; then on sd. Easton line untill it come to the line which divides the North and South precinct in said Norton; then on said precinct-line untill it comes to the line of the Senter Quarter; then on the line of the senter Quarter to the way that goeth from medfield

Rhoad, near Benjamin Trow's house, to makepeace's mill, whare we first began.

"3dly, Then we set of a third Quarter, begining at the senter-Quarter line, near to David Williamse's house; then Ranging by the way that goeth to the new Bridge; then down stream to Wineconet pond, and so to Extend to the Bounds of Norton town to the Line of the second quarter, near Jonathan Clap's house; then on the Line of the Second Quarter to the Line of the Senter Quarter; and on sd. Line to whare we began.

"4thly, Then set of a fourth Quarter, begining at the way near Ishabod Washburn's house; then Ranged so as to Take in Josiah Woodward's house, and Cornelius Tucker's house, whare he now lives, keeping the Rhod that goeth by Samuel Willise's house to Taunton line; then on Taunton line to weneconet Bridge; Then across Weneconet pond to the new bridge; then on the Road that goeth to David Williamse's house to the line of the center Quarter; Then on said line to the place whare we began.

"5thly, Then we set of a fifth Quarter, begining at Chartly mill-pond to Attleborough Line, so as to take in the house which was Samuel Tucker's, now Thomas Morey's, and John Braman's; then on Norton line until it comes to the way that goeth by Samuel Willise's, which is a bound of the south Quarter; then on sd. bound to the center Line; then on the center to the place whare we began.

"6thly, Then we set of a sixth Quarter, on the westerly side of the line of the center Quarter and the west of the fifth Quarter, and to the Extent of the west so far as to take in all the south precinct in sd. Norton, called Chartley Quarter.

"Dated in NORTON, March second day, 1758.

"JONATHAN LINCOLN,
WILLIAM STONE,
BENJAMIN COBB,
EBENEZER BURT,
JAMES GODFREY,
JONATHAN EDDY,
NATHAN HODGES, Jr.,
NOAH WISWALL,

} Committee of the
South Precinct."

The committee of the North Precinct reported that the schools in that part of the town should be kept at the dwelling-houses of John Caswell, jun., Timothy Welman, and Solomon Bates.

A new division of the school ground was mooted in 1769; but no definite action was taken.

At the annual March meeting in 1772, another attempt was made to divide the school ground, but failed. It was, however, "put to vote, whether the centre Quarter should have one month's schooling more than the other quarters in sd. town, & that the sd. month's schooling be kept on the Easterly side of Rumford River in sd. center quarter; and it Passed in the negative."

The exciting scenes of the Revolution soon followed; and, until the close of that eventful struggle, the town paid but little attention to schools. During the continuance of the war, we are unable to find any appropriation for school purposes. Every cent of money that could be spared was needed to clothe, equip, and sustain those who battled for freedom and human rights. Occasionally, during the war, a school was sustained, for a few weeks at a time, by the voluntary contributions of one neighborhood and another. But as soon as the war closed, or as soon as there was a prospect of peace, we find the attention of the town again turned to the education of their children, which had been so sadly neglected during the distracted state of the country. Within a week from the day the treaty of peace with the mother-country was signed, or Oct. 6, 1783, the town chose Capt. Israel Trow, Capt. Seth Smith, Lieut. David Arnold, Samuel Copeland, Capt. Isaac Hodges, Lieut. Ebenezer Titus, William Burt, Capt. Seth Gilbert, and Capt. Joseph Hodges, "a Committee to Divide the school Ground." They also "voted to raise, for the purpose of schooling, £60." This shows that they were in earnest. The prospect of peace revived their drooping spirits.

The meeting was adjourned once and again; and on Nov. 10, 1783, the committee reported in favor of dividing the town into eight quarters, and fixing the bounds where they have remained to the present day, with some few slight alterations that have been made quite recently. The report of the committee was

accepted by the town, and an agent was chosen "in each quarter to take care of their money;" viz., —

" 1st Quarter, Silas Cobb.	5th Quarter, John Hall.
2nd " Ebn. Titus.	6th " Israel Trow.
3rd " David Arnold.	7th " Samuel Hunt.
4th " Isaac Hodges.	8th " Noah Clap."

In April, 1784, Eleazer Walker and others petitioned for an "alteration in their school Quarters."

A meeting was called to consider the matter; but was "dissolved," without any action upon the petition.

I do not find that any school agents were chosen in 1784. Probably those chosen in November, 1783, continued in office till the spring of 1785; when the following persons were chosen, called trustees: —

" 1st Quarter, Coll. Cobb.	5th Quarter, Timothy Briggs, Jr.
2nd " Ebn. Titus.	6th " Lieut. Shepard.
3rd " Lieut. Arnold.	7th " Samuel Hunt.
4th " Isaac Hodges.	8th " Samuel Godfrey."

In 1786, Col. Cobb, Ephraim Lane, George Hodges, Isaac Hodges, Seth Smith, Seth Gilbert, Samuel Hunt, Samuel Godfrey, were chosen trustees.

In 1787, Silas Cobb, Ephraim Lane, Josiah Woodward, James Hodges, Deacon Smith, Benjamin Wild, Samuel Hunt, Eleazer Walker, were chosen trustees.

In 1788, the trustees were Col. Cobb, Nathan Perry, Elkanah Lincoln, James Hodges, Seth Smith, jun., Deacon D. Dean, Samuel Hunt, Dr. Babbit, Dr. S. Morey.

The trustees for 1789 were Col. Cobb, Nathan Perry, Lieut. Lincoln, Jonathan Briggs, Capt. Crane, William Burt, Dr. Samuel Morey, Elisha Cobb.

I do not find that any trustees were chosen after this date.

March 28, 1785, it was "voted to make a new division of school Quarters." At an adjourned meeting, May 12, Dr. Daniel Parker, Capt. Isaac Hodges,

Eleazer Clap, Deacon Daniel Dean, Tisdale Hodges, Lieut. Ebenezer Titus, Elijah Hodges, Lieut. David Arnold, Noah Wiswall, Nathan Perry, Edward Babbit, Capt. David Clap, and David Lincoln, were chosen a committee to re-divide the town into school quarters.

Adjourned once and again; and, on Oct. 3, "voted not to Except the report of the committee chosen to divide the town into school Quarters." Then reconsidered this vote, and recommitted the whole matter to the committee to be "revised and corrected;" and adjourned to Nov. 7. It was then "voted to except the new division of school Quarters."

Reconsidered this vote, and dissolved the meeting.

Nov. 26, 1787, it was "voted that the first school District be divided into two Districts." This made nine districts in town. We may as well state here as anywhere, that on April 2, 1792, by a vote of the town, "the centre School Quarter" was "re-united and connected with the one formerly taken off."

There was an article in the warrant for a town-meeting, Dec. 30, 1789, "To choose a committee to divide the town into Districts, agreeable to a Late Law of the Commonwealth relating to schooling." At the meeting, Lieut. David Arnold, Capt. Trow, Col. Cobb, Lieut. Nathan Babbit, Capt. Lane, Capt. Crane, Deacon Daniel Dean, Capt. Joseph Hodges, and Noah Clap, were chosen a committee to divide the town into school Districts." Hon. Horace Mann, the first Secretary of the Board of Education in Massachusetts, considers the law of 1789, authorizing towns to divide themselves into districts, as "the most unfortunate law, on the subject of common schools, ever enacted in the State."¹

I can find no report of this committee. They probably reported favorably to the project; for, Feb. 14, 1790, it was voted to divide the town into nine school districts, and "that the boundaries of the school districts be the same as the Town now stands divided."

¹ Tenth Report, p. 37.

These votes seem to have been reconsidered at an adjourned meeting in April following, and the whole matter is left in the dark. In all probability, however, the districts remained for many years — with the exception stated on page 265 — as they were constituted in 1783. Coming out of the Revolutionary war poor, and the finances of the country being in a distracted state, it is not wonderful that the town took no immediate steps for the erection of schoolhouses. For some years after the war, they felt compelled to have their schools kept in private houses, as had been the previous custom. Yet all were not content with this arrangement; and, as soon as the finances became somewhat settled, a movement was made by John Hodges and others “to build a number of schoolhouses in the several Districts in town.” Dec. 30, 1789, it was “voted that six schoolhouses should be built in sd. town, at their expense.” Then adjourned to Jan. 11, 1790. No doubt John Hodges and his co-adjutors went home rejoicing at the prospect of new schoolhouses. No doubt their children’s faces brightened, as they heard the report of what was done at the meeting. That night they all dreamed of being in the new houses, having a happy time, in the pursuit of knowledge. But they little knew what bitter disappointments were in store for them. They very soon found, that to vote to build schoolhouses was no sure index of their speedy erection; for at the adjourned meeting, Jan. 11, the vote for building “six schoolhouses” was reconsidered. Then some one besides John Hodges went home rejoicing. The friends of schoolhouses, though defeated, were not subdued. In eighteen days, a warrant was issued calling a town-meeting, Feb. 15, 1790, to consider the petition of Isaac Basset and nine others, “to see if the town will build any schoolhouses, and how many, and where to set” them. At the meeting, it was “voted that the selectmen preside as moderators in the several school districts at their meetings, to prefix places to set a schoolhouse in each District; and, where the district

cannot agree, for the selectmen to establish the place for sd. schoolhouse." Adjourned to the first Monday of April. Met at that time, and "voted not to build any schoolhouses at the expense of the town." Thus the whole manner was "knocked into pie" again.

In 1792, Silas Cobb and twelve others petition for a meeting "to see if the town will consider the circumstances of the town respecting schooling, school districts and houses; and to vote and act on each article as they shall think proper." The town met May 14, chose a "tyding-man," and dissolved the meeting.

The friends of education are not, however, discouraged. They take time to arrange their plans; and, Jan. 5, 1795, a meeting was held "to take into consideration the petition of Seth Smith, Esq., and ten others, for a town-meeting, to know whether the town will agree to build a number of Schoolhouses." It was "voted to build a number of schoolhouses at the expense of the town;" and Ephraim Raymond, Samuel Godfrey, Daniel Parker, John Crane, Seth Smith, Esq., Ebenezer Titus, David Arnold, Daniel Knap, and Zebulon White, were chosen a committee to report a plan to the town where the said houses shall stand. Also "voted for the town to find firewood for the several schools for the futer;" and then adjourned to Jan. 12. Thus, again, the friends of schoolhouses triumphed. But their time of rejoicing was short; for at the meeting, Jan. 12, the votes for "building schoolhouses" and "finding firewood" were reconsidered, and the above committee "excused from any further service." Two years go by; when William Verry and nine others want schoolhouses built, and ask for a town-meeting to consider the matter. The town assembled Jan. 16, 1797, and voted "to raise a sum of money for the purpose of building a number of schoolhouses;" and chose a committee, consisting of Daniel Parker, Silas Cobb, Ephraim Raymond, William Burt, John Crane, Ephraim Lane, jun., David Arnold, and Zebulon White, "to determine how

many are necessary, and where they should be set, and the probable expense;" and they were instructed to report at an adjourned meeting in March, when it was "voted not to except the report of the committee for building schoolhouses." From these facts, it will be seen, that, "in days of auld lang syne," there was no certainty of the erection of schoolhouses, even after they had been voted up by the town. I find no further attempt on the part of the town to build houses for the several districts.

Feb. 28, 1800, the General Court passed a law authorizing school districts to raise money to build schoolhouses for themselves; and also requiring the clerks of the several school districts to be sworn to the faithful discharge of their duty. They were to keep a record of the doings at the district-meetings. I have been unable to find any school-district records that date back farther than about the year 1817; so that we are obliged in most cases to rely upon individual testimony as to when the first schoolhouses were built in town.

There was no schoolhouse in No. 1, or the Centre District, till 1817. This was built by Zebulon White, and cost something more than two hundred dollars. It stood between where the present house stands and the road. For some years the school was kept, says Deacon Lane, in an old dwelling-house which stood on the easterly side of the road, nearly opposite to the house now occupied by the writer of these pages, between the house of H. H. Wetherell and the "Parsonage House" so called, now owned by L. M. Wheaton, Esq. After the Freemason Lodge was established in town, the room under their hall was used for some years for school purposes, till the district erected a house for themselves in 1817. This house stood till 1847, when it was torn down, and incorporated into the new house built that year; which is still occupied for school purposes, and stands a few feet farther back from the road than the first house. An attempt was made, in the spring of 1856, to build a house more in

accordance with the wants of the present age ; but, we are sorry to record, the attempt failed. The house was repaired and painted during the year 1858.

In No. 2, the first schoolhouse was erected by the late Judge George Leonard, at his own expense ; and it is thought by some to have been the first house erected in town. It stood for some years about twenty-five or thirty rods easterly of Wading River, on the southerly side of the road, between Judge Leonard's house and the house now occupied and owned by Stillman A. Wetherell. Some trouble arose between Judge Leonard and the district relative to the house, and the judge caused it to be removed ; and it now forms a part of the L of the above-mentioned Wetherell's house. Jan. 12, 1819, a tax of two hundred and two dollars and seventy cents was assessed upon the district ; and, probably in the spring of that year, the frame of a house was erected in the corner of Judge Leonard's lot, nearly opposite to where William Lane now lives. There was some misunderstanding relative to the land, between the owner and the district ; and the frame was soon removed to where it now stands. It is supposed, however, not to have been so far completed as to be occupied as a schoolroom till 1821. It is now (1858) the only one remaining in town of those old-fashioned square-built houses ; with gallery-seats on two sides of the building, with a sort of broad aisle through the centre between them, — at one end of which is the desk, and at the other the door ; with the stove in the centre of the room ; serving to illustrate, especially in the winter season, the five different zones ; also latitude and longitude, and various other geographical matters.

We wish it could be daguerreotyped, outside and inside, for the benefit of future generations ; for probably the spirit of the age will soon cause its downfall.

The first schoolhouse in No. 3 was erected for the district by George Hodges, in 1801, within a few feet

of where the present house stands. It was rough and unique in many respects. It had but one aisle, and two rows of long benches upon either side; a desk in one corner; a dark-closet for the girls' bonnets; a huge fireplace, with a cumbrous chimney. Dec. 30, 1800, a tax of one hundred and eighty dollars and nineteen cents was assessed for building this house. It stood till 1837, when it was removed a few rods westerly of R. H. Hall's house, and converted into a dwelling-house, and a new and more convenient building built on the same spot in its stead. Henry Gilmore, of Raynham, taught the first school in this new house, in the winter of 1837-8. The present house was erected late in the autumn of 1854. The first school kept in it commenced Jan. 22, 1855. The teachers were Miss Maria J. Newcomb, of Taunton; and Miss Louisa C. Dean, of Easton. This house, with its appurtenances, cost something more than two thousand dollars.

The first house in No. 4 was erected for the district by Joseph Hodges, in 1801, and probably cost a little less than two hundred dollars; for, on the 24th of December, a tax of one hundred and ninety dollars was assessed upon the district for building it. This house stood at first a few rods northerly, and on the opposite side of the road, from where Benjamin Richmond now lives. In 1838, it was removed to the four corners, on the other side of Mr. Richmond's house, and nearly fifty dollars expended in repairs. It was occupied for school purposes till 1853; when the new house was erected, at an expense, including land, &c., of about eleven hundred dollars. It was dedicated with appropriate services to the purposes for which it was erected, on Monday, Oct. 17, 1853. Mr. Daniel Leach, of Roxbury, Agent of the Board of Education, was the orator of the day. Some account of the early history of schools in Norton, and especially in the 4th District, was read by Rev. G. F. Clark. Short addresses were made by Rev. S. P. Snow and others; and the following song, written by Hodges Reed, Esq., of Taunton, once a teacher in the district, was sung:—

THE SONG OF THE OLD FOLKS IN THE NEW SCHOOL-
HOUSE.

"Things ain't now as they used to be"
A hundred years ago,
When schools were kept in private rooms,
Above stairs or below;
When sturdy boys and rosy girls
Romped through the drifted snow,
And spelled their duty and their abs,
A hundred years ago.

Those old schoolrooms were dark and cold
When Winter's sun ran low,
But darker was the master's frown,
A hundred years ago:
And high hung up the birchen rod,
That all the school might see;
Which taught the boys obedience,
As well as "Rule of Three."

Though 'twas but little that they learned
A hundred years ago,
Yet what they got they ne'er let slip;
'Twas well whipped in, you know.
But now the times are greatly changed:
The rod has had its day;
The boys are won by gentle words,
The girls by love obey.

The schoolhouse now a palace is;
The scholars, kings and queens;
They master Algebra and Greek
Before they reach their teens.
Where once was crying, Music sweet
Her soothing influence sheds;
Ferules are used for beating time,
And not for beating heads.

Yes, Learning was a ragged boy,
A hundred years ago:
With six weeks' schooling in a year,
What could the urchin do?
But now he is a full-grown man,
And boasts attainments rare:
He's got his silver slippers on,
And running everywhere.

The house was well filled, and the audience seemed much pleased with the exercises. The first school in this house commenced Oct. 25, 1853; and was taught by Miss Amelia D. Blanding, of Rehoboth.

From the town-records, it appears that a schoolhouse was standing August, 1799, in the 5th District, near

where Mr. Seth Smith now (1858) resides. Most probably, this house was built before the one in No. 2 by Judge Leonard. Rev. I. Braman (already referred to), speaking of the schools in his boyhood, says, "In Norton, there was but one schoolhouse. That was in the east part of the town, a short distance south of Dr. Parker's." Of course, this must be the house in No. 5; for Dr. Parker lived where Benjamin Blandin (lately deceased) resided, — a near neighbor of Seth Smith.

This house in No. 5, says Deacon Stillman Smith, — who went to school in it, — "was a square building, with a four-sided cap roof, with the chimney standing in one corner." He says, "It was moved in 1802 to near where the schoolhouse now stands." It remained there about a year unfinished, and then another house was built for the district by Joseph Hunt.¹

It stood a few rods northerly from where the present house is located. Fifteen or twenty years since, it was moved nearly on to the site of the present house; and was there burned on the night of March 14, 1854. The present house was erected the same year, at a cost of six hundred dollars; and the first school was taught in it by Miss Maria J. Newcomb, commencing Oct. 16, 1854.

It is thought that a schoolhouse was erected in No. 6 in 1799 or 1800. It was moved back from the road, an addition made to it, thoroughly repaired, and modernized to some extent, in 1843. It is still used for school purposes, though much changed for the better, both in its interior and exterior appearance, from what it originally was.

In 1801, a schoolhouse was built in No. 7. The tax of a hundred and thirty-eight dollars and ninety-six cents for building it was made Jan. 12, 1801. It

¹ We think the old house was moved in 1801, or earlier; for, Nov. 28, 1801, the district voted to raise a tax of a hundred and sixty dollars, — which was made by the assessors, Oct. 9, 1802, — no doubt to build a new house.

stood till December, 1854; when it was torn down, and incorporated into the new house, erected January, 1855, — which stands a few feet farther from the road, directly back of where the old house stood. It cost a little less than six hundred dollars. The first school in it commenced Feb. 26, 1855; and was taught by Edwin Goss, of Sterling.

The old house in No. 8 is believed to have been erected previous to 1800: I know not the exact year. It stood a few rods westerly, on the opposite side of the road, from where the present house stands. The new house was erected in the summer of 1853. The first school in it was taught by Miss Sarah E. Hitchcock, who commenced the summer term of the school for that year in the old house, and closed it in the new Sept. 16, — having occupied it about one month.

The division of the school-money among the several districts, so that every child in town shall receive as nearly as possible an equal amount of schooling, is a very important matter.

Various methods of apportioning the money have been adopted by the town from time to time. Whether any of them is the best that could have been devised, is a question for the consideration of the friends of equal school rights and privileges. It is, no doubt, a difficult matter, where some of the districts have a large number of scholars and others but very few, to so divide the money that each scholar shall have the same amount and quality of schooling. No general rule will bear equally upon all.

In the warrant for a town-meeting, March 19, 1764, there was an article —

“To vote (if they see) that the people of the Respective Quarters whare the schools in sd. town have been usually Kept shall draw out of the Treasury of sd. town Their proportionable part of the money Raised in sd. town, to be used by them towards keeping a school in sd. Respective Quarters, as they shall think proper.”

We do not find any action upon this matter.

At the March meeting in 1767, it was "voted that the town will divide the money to Each school Quarter according to the Rates each school Quarter pays;" and Dr. Gideon Tiffany, Isaac Hodges, John Crane, George Leonard, jun., Nathan Babbitt, Benjamin Copeland, Dr. Jonathan Pratt, Elijah Hodges, and Col. Ephraim Leonard, were chosen a committee to apportion the money in accordance with the above vote, and to report at an adjourned meeting. At the adjournment, the above vote was reconsidered; and it was decreed that each of the quarters "draw the 9th part of the money voted by the town for the school."

In May, 1768, it was voted that each of the quarters "draw the money that they pay towards the support of the school, according to the tax-bill;" and a committee of three in each quarter was appointed to attend to the matter. Then it was "voted, that, while the money is expending in any quarter of the town, every person hath a Right to send their children to the sd. school."

Oct. 6, 1783, the town "voted that each school ground, after a new Division, shall draw their part of the money raised for schooling, in order to hire a schoolmaster." This vote is somewhat ambiguous. It was probably intended that each district, or quarter, should draw as much money as was assessed on the polls and estates of that district; which, of course, would not be very just, unless the valuation of the several districts was the same, or nearly so. Yet this division was, no doubt, satisfactory to a majority of the town; for we find no vote in reference to a division of the school money after this, till May 12, 1806, when it was "voted that each school quarter shall draw money for schooling, according to the number of scholars from 4 years to 18, and the scholars to be confined to their own quarters." This was, no doubt, deemed an innovation, a subversion of justice, and therefore not to be tolerated. Hence, on the first day of the following September, it was "voted to reconsider the vote about schooling, and to have it stand as it was the last year." But we find no vote

relative to a division of the money in 1805. There is but little doubt that the division "the last year" was in accordance with the vote of October, 1783. Another attempt at change was made May 11, 1807. It was then "voted that the school money shall be divided according to the number of children, from four years old to twenty, in each quarter." Again the conservatives rally; and, July 20 of the same year, it was "voted that our school money should be divided as it was the last year."

Thus, in all probability, the old system of apportioning the money prevailed till May 12, 1817, when the town voted "that each school district shall draw money according to the number of scholars it contains, from the age of four years to twenty-one." One man in each district was chosen to number the scholars.

This plan was not long satisfactory, as will be seen by the following action, taken Nov. 2, 1818: "Voted that the money raised for schooling be equally divided among the several school districts." In accordance with this vote, the money was divided till April 5, 1847, when the present method of apportioning the money was adopted; which is to divide one-half of the amount raised by the town for schooling equally among the districts, and the other half according to the number of scholars in the district. The money received from the State School Fund is divided equally among the several districts. By the law of June 25, 1789, it was made the duty of the ministers of the gospel, and the selectmen of the several towns, or "other persons" who should be "specially chosen" for that purpose, to visit and inspect the schools in their respective towns "once in every six months at least," to inquire into the regulation and discipline thereof, and the proficiency of the school, &c.; giving reasonable notice of their intended visitation. And it was also made their duty "to use their best endeavors that the youth of their respective towns do regularly attend school."

I cannot find any choice of "other persons," nor

any action of the town relative to the matter, till May 12, 1817, when the town chose "a committee," consisting of Earl P. White, William Verry, and Luther Lincoln, "to inspect the schools with the selectmen at the opening and closing of the same." There is no evidence to show that a similar committee was rechosen. March 4, 1826, an Act was passed by the General Court, requiring towns to choose a School Committee, of not less than five persons, to "have the general charge and superintendence of all the public schools in their respective towns." This committee were required to visit the schools during the first week, and on some day within two weeks of the close; and one or more of them to visit all the schools in town once a month, without giving notice of their visit. The committee were to make a report, to the Secretary of the Commonwealth, of various matters relating to public instruction, similar to what is now required. This law marks a new era in the development of our common-school system; and, as might have been expected, met with a strong opposition from a portion of the inhabitants, and from some towns in their corporate capacity. It found opponents in Norton, as will immediately appear.

April 3, 1826, there was a town-meeting for the purpose of choosing "a school committee to make out a return, to the Secretary of this Commonwealth, of the amount of money expended for the support of schools, the number of scholars, the time of keeping the schools," &c.

This meeting was adjourned to May 1. Then met, and "voted to dismiss the above warrant, and to have nothing more to do with it." The end of the matter was not yet; for, in ten days, John Gilbert and others knock at the door of the selectmen's office with a petition for a town-meeting "to choose a school committee agreeably to a late law of this commonwealth." The meeting was held May 18, and it was "voted to choose a committee consisting of eight persons." Accordingly, one was chosen from each school district. Their

names may be seen further on, heading the list of the School Committee. Within a week after they were chosen, Elkanah Wood and others petition the selectmen for a town-meeting "to see if the town will dismiss the school committee chosen the present month from any further duties." The town met to act upon the matter, May 31; chose a moderator, and dissolved the meeting.

Thus the attempt to "crush out" the School Committee most signally failed. Yet, from that day to this, they have never been regarded with any special favor by a minority of the legal voters. But, from 1826 to the present time, a School Committee has been annually chosen, with the exception of the year 1829. Whether chosen or not that year, is uncertain. No record of such a choice is made on the town-books. The town-clerk for that year thinks none were chosen. The opposition to them was so strong, that he thinks the election of them was, by general consent, permitted to go by default.

The committee chosen in 1826 made a report to the town, through the chairman, Rev. Pitt Clarke; for, April 2, 1827, the town "voted to accept the report of the school committee." A copy of this report is now on file in the town-clerk's office. The law of 1826, establishing the office of School Committee, did not, however, require them to report to their respective towns, but to the Secretary of the Commonwealth. For more than ten years thereafter, we find no allusion on the town-books to a report of the School Committee; and probably none was made.

By an Act of the Legislature, passed April 13, 1838, School Committees were required annually to "make a detailed report of the condition of the several Public Schools in their respective towns;" which report was either to "be read in open town-meeting," or to "be printed and distributed for the use of the inhabitants," &c. In obedience to this law, the committee chosen in 1838 made a report to the town at the April meeting in 1839. It was written and read by Rev. A.

M. Bridge. It is believed that a regular report of the committee has been yearly made to the town since that time.

At a town-meeting, March 9, 1846, it was "ordered, that 500 copies of the Report of the School committee be printed and distributed for the use of the town;" and from that time to the present, with the exception of 1847, it has been annually printed and distributed through the town; and has thus, no doubt, been productive of much good.

The following is a list of the School Committee of Norton, from 1826 to 1857 inclusive:—

- 1826. Rev. Pitt Clarke, William Wetherell, John Hall, 2d,
Simeon Blandin, Ephraim Raymond, John Crane,
Calvin Lincoln, John Arnold, jun.
- 1827. Rev. Pitt Clarke, Laban Wheaton, Ephraim Raymond.
- 1828. Rev. Pitt Clarke, E. P. White, Laban Wheaton.
- 1829. Probably none chosen.
- 1830. Rev. Pitt Clarke, Thomas Braman, Eddy Lincoln.
- 1831. Rev. Pitt Clarke, Thomas Braman, jun., John Crane.
- 1832. Rev. Pitt Clarke, John Crane, Thomas Braman, jun.
- 1833. Rev. Pitt Clarke, Thomas Braman, Thomas Copeland.
- 1834. Rev. Pitt Clarke, Thomas Braman, Thomas Copeland.
- 1835. Dr. Richard F. Sweet, Eddy Lincoln, Cromwell Leonard.
- 1836. Rev. A. M. Bridge, Rev. C. W. Allen, R. F. Sweet.
- 1837. Rev. Asarelah M. Bridge, Rev. Cyrus W. Allen, R. F. Sweet.
- 1838. Rev. A. M. Bridge, Rev. C. W. Allen, R. F. Sweet.
- 1839. Eddy Lincoln, George B. Crane, Zebulon P. White.
- 1840. Rev. A. M. Bridge, Rev. C. W. Allen, Rev. Nathan Chapman.
- 1841. Rev. C. W. Allen, Rev. William P Tilden, Almond Tucker.
- 1842. Rev. William P. Tilden, Almond Tucker, Rodolphus H. Williams.
- 1843. Rev. William P. Tilden, Almond Tucker, R. H. Williams.
- 1844. Rev. William P. Tilden, R. H. Williams, Rev. Samuel J. Carr.
- 1845. R. H. Williams, J. Calvin Crane, Almond Tucker.

- 1846. R. H. Williams, J. C. Crane, A. Tucker.
- 1847. R. H. Williams, A. Tucker, Rev. Amory Gale.
- 1848. Rev. William Barrows, J. C. Crane, Augustus Lane.
- 1849. Rev. Frederic Hinckley, Charles W. Hodges, Augustus Lane.
- 1850. Rev. F. Hinckley, A. Lane, C. W. Hodges.
- 1851. Rev. William Read, Rev. S. P. Snow, J. C. Crane.
- 1852. James B. Lincoln, Dr. Benjamin M. Round, Benjamin E. Sweet.
- 1853. Rev. George F. Clark, Rev. Franklin Holmes, Dr. Benjamin M. Round.
- 1854. Rev. G. F. Clark, Rev. F. Holmes, R. H. Williams.
- 1855. Christopher Comstock, A. A. Lincoln, jun., Thomas T. Rockwood.
- 1856. Rev. George F. Clark, Rev. John A. Gibson, Benjamin E. Sweet.
- 1857. Eddy Lincoln, Benjamin E. Sweet, R. Henry Hall.

CHAPTER XX.

MUNICIPAL AND OFFICIAL HISTORY.

“Are you good men and true?” — SHAKESPEARE.

It is believed that most of the town-meetings, from the organization of the town till the Town House was built in 1843, were held in the “Publick Meeting-house,” either in the South or North Precinct, but principally at the former place.

The first warrant for a town-meeting, that we find recorded on the town-books, is dated “February ye 20 day, Annoque Domini 1718-19;” and the meeting-house was the place where the voters were to assemble.

Occasionally, the meetings were adjourned to a private dwelling-house, probably on account of the inclemency of the weather, — the meeting-house having no means of warming it.

By the loss of the records from 1711 to 1715, we are unable to give the names of all the prominent town-officers for those years. From various papers and sources, we have learned the names of a few of the officers before the commencement of the records now extant; and, in cases where there is some doubt, we insert a question-mark (?).

The names of the town-clerks for 1711 and 1712, I find attached to marriage certificates; the treasurer's name for 1711, in a constable's warrant; those of the selectmen for 1711, on the town-records, in connection with a return of a highway; those of two of the selectmen in 1712, on a deed, given to them by George Leonard, of some land on which the meeting-house stood; those of 1713, on the North-Purchase Records, pp. 38 and 39; those of 1714, on the town-records attached to a return of highway.

The annual meetings for the choice of town-officers, from 1712 to 1858, have been held in March. The meetings for the choice of Governor, from the adoption of the Constitution in 1780, were held in April, till the year 1831, when the Constitution was amended so that the election should take place in November. The meetings to choose representative to General Court were usually held in May, till the year 1831. Since then, they have been held on the day of the Governor's election.

We now lay before our readers the names of the moderators of the annual March meetings, the town-clerks, treasurers, representatives, selectmen, assessors, tithing-men, and wardens, for each year from 1711 to 1857. We give the titles attached to the names as we find them on the records; and it will be understood that a portion of these officers, previous to 1770, belonged to the North Precinct, now Mansfield.

MODERATOR.	TOWN-CLERK.	TREASURER.	REPRESENTATIVE.
1711. John Hodges.	John Briggs.	Nicholas White.	George Leonard, Esq.
1712. George Leonard.	George Leonard.		Voted not to send.
1713. George Leonard (?)	George Leonard (?)		
1714. George Leonard.	George Leonard.	Samuel Hodges.	John Hodges, sen.
1715. George Leonard. ¹	George Leonard.	John Wetherell, sen.	Nicholas White.
1716. John Hodges.	John Hodges.	Jonathan Lincoln.	Samuel Hodges. ²
1717. John Hodges, sen.	John Hodges.	John Briggs, sen.	Capt. Samuel Brintnell.
1718. John Hodges.	John Hodges.	Eleazer Eddy.	
1719. John Briggs.	John Hodges.	Josiah Pratt.	
1720. Benjamin Williams.	George Leonard.	Josiah Pratt.	
1721. Benjamin Williams.	George Leonard.	Daniel Brame.	John Hodges. ³
1722. Lieut. Nicholas White.	George Leonard.	Simeon Wetherell.	Samuel Hodges.
1723. John Briggs, sen.	George Leonard.	Simeon Wetherell.	William Stone.
1724. Nicholas White.	George Leonard.	William Stone.	George Leonard.
1725. John Briggs, 2d.	George Leonard.	William Stone.	George Leonard. ⁴
1726. Lieut. Nicholas White.	George Leonard.	William Stone.	Capt. Samuel Brintnell.
1727. Capt. Samuel Brintnell.	George Leonard.	William Stone.	Capt. Samuel Brintnell.
1728. John Briggs, 2d.			
1729.			

¹ Sept. 18, John Hodges was chosen town-clerk in place of George Leonard, deceased.

² At a meeting for the choice of representative, May 13, 1720, "Cap. Brintnal had 28 Eight votes, being the megolety of the vots. then the Selectmen ajurned the sd. meeaning for the Space of two ours, & Sent one of the Selectmen, & another man with Him, to cap. Brintnal's for his answer; & Cap. Brintnal's wife Told the Inbasidars her husband was Gon to Coneticut (nameley, to Ashford), & she did not Expect him home tell the next tuesday; & If he went farther, as he did Expect when he went from home, not So soon. Sd. brintnal left a note Signeyfeyng sumthing; but, the selectmen not understanding what it ment, Then said meeaning was called a Gain; &, by the megolety of the voters then present, Samuel Hodges was chosen, & warned In by the Con-staben; & sd. Hodges Excepted."

³ At a meeting for the purpose of choosing a representative, May 18, Samuel Brintnell, Nicholas White, and John Newland, sen., were severally chosen representative, but "Refused to Sarve." Then "they called for a vote for another; and there was not one vote brought in for any other person." So the town was unrepresented.

⁴ He probably resigned; for, Nov. 13, 1727, Capt. Samuel Brintnell was chosen representative.

MODERATOR.	TOWN-CLERK.	TREASURER.	REPRESENTATIVE.
1730. John Briggs, 2d.	George Leonard.	William Stone.	Samuel Brintnell. ¹
1731. John Briggs, 2d.	John Hodges.	William Stone.	Samuel Brintnell.
1732. George Leonard.	John Hodges.	William Stone.	George Leonard.
1733. George Leonard.	John Hodges, the elder.	William Stone.	Mr. Samuel Clapp.
1734. George Leonard, Esq.	John Hodges, 1st.	William Stone.	George Leonard.
1735. George Leonard, Esq.	John Hodges, 1st.	William Stone.	Capt. Ephraim Leonard.
1736. George Leonard, Esq.	John Hodges, 1st.	William Stone.	Ephraim Leonard.
1737. George Leonard, Esq.	John Hodges, 1st.	William Stone.	Capt. Joseph Hodges.
1738. George Leonard, Esq.	John Hodges, 1st.	Benjamin Cobb.	Ephraim Leonard, Esq.
1739. George Leonard, Esq.	John Hodges, 1st.	Benjamin Cobb.	Lieut. Benjamin Williams.
1740. George Leonard, Esq.	John Hodges, 1st.	Benjamin Cobb.	George Leonard, Esq.
1741. George Leonard, Esq.	John Hodges, 1st.	Benjamin Cobb.	George Leonard.
1742. George Leonard, Esq.	John Hodges, 1st.	Benjamin Pratt.	George Leonard. ²
1743. George Leonard, Esq.	George Leonard.	Benjamin Pratt.	Ephraim Leonard.
1744. Ephraim Leonard, Esq.	George Leonard, Esq.	Jonathan Lawrence.	Capt. Josiah Pratt.
1745. Capt. Simeon Wetherell.	George Leonard, Esq.	John Andrews.	Capt. Samuel Caswell.
1746. Ephraim Leonard, Esq.	George Leonard.	John Andrews.	Capt. Samuel Caswell.
1747. William Stone.	George Leonard.	Lieut. Benjamin Cobb.	Ephraim Leonard, Esq.
1748. William Stone.	George Leonard.	Benjamin Cobb.	Mr. Benjamin Cobb.
1749. Capt. Simeon Wetherell.	George Leonard, Esq.	Benjamin Cobb.	Mr. Josiah White.
1750. Ephraim Leonard, Esq.	George Leonard, Esq.	Benjamin Cobb.	Mr. Josiah White.
1751. John Fisher.	George Leonard, jun.	Benjamin Cobb.	Ephraim Leonard, Esq.
1752. Hon. George Leonard, Esq.	David Williams.	William Stone, jun.	Ephraim Leonard, Esq.
1753. Hon. George Leonard, Esq.	David Williams.	William Stone, jun.	Voted not to send. ³
1754. Ephraim Leonard, Esq.	David Williams.	William Stone, jun.	Ephraim Leonard, Esq.

¹ He was chosen Jan. 29, 1730-1, for "the remaining part of the year."

² He probably resigned; for, on the 1st of June, Ephraim Leonard was chosen representative.

³ May 14, 1753, the selectmen were chosen agents to memorialize the General Court that the town might not be fined for neglecting to send a representative, on account of the great expense the South Precinct had incurred in building a meeting-house and settling a minister. For petition, see State Papers, vol. lxxxvii. p. 322. The town was, however, fined £20; which was remitted by the General Court, May 31, 1754.

MODERATOR.	TOWN-CLERK.	TREASURER.	REPRESENTATIVE.
1755. Ephraim Leonard, Esq.	David Williams.	Benjamin Cobb.	Mr. Thomas Morey.
1756. Ephraim Leonard, Esq.	David Williams.	Lieut. Benjamin Cobb.	Mr. Thomas Morey.
1757. Lieut. Benjamin Cobb.	David Williams.	Samuel Newcomb.	Mr. Thomas Morey.
1758. Lieut. Benjamin Cobb.	David Williams.	William Cobb.	Capt. Thomas Morey.
1759. Capt. Thomas Morey.	David Williams.	William Cobb.	Capt. Thomas Morey.
1760. Capt. Thomas Morey.	David Williams.	William Cobb.	Thomas Morey, Esq.
1761. Major Thomas Morey.	David Williams.	Major Thomas Morey.	Thomas Morey, Esq.
1762. George Leonard, jun., Esq.	David Williams.	Thomas Morey, Esq.	Thomas Morey, Esq.
1763. George Leonard, jun., Esq.	David Williams.	Thomas Morey, Esq.	Thomas Morey, Esq.
1764. Ephraim Leonard, Esq.	David Williams.	Thomas Morey, Esq.	George Leonard, jun., Esq.
1765. Dr. George Wheaton.	David Williams.	David Williams.	George Leonard, jun., Esq.
1766. George Leonard, jun., Esq.	David Williams.	David Williams.	George Leonard, jun., Esq.
1767. George Leonard, jun., Esq.	David Williams.	David Williams.	George Leonard, jun., Esq.
1768. George Leonard, jun., Esq.	David Williams.	David Williams.	George Leonard, jun., Esq.
1769. Dr. George Wheaton.	David Williams.	Mr. John Crane.	George Leonard, jun., Esq.
1770. Thomas Morey, Esq.	David Williams.	Nathan Rabbitt.	Dr. George Wheaton.
1771. Hon. George Leonard, jr., Esq.	David Williams.	George Makepeace.	Dr. George Wheaton.
1772. Lieut. William Cobb.	David Williams.	George Makepeace.	Dr. George Wheaton.
1773. Thomas Morey, Esq.	David Williams.	Lieut. William Cobb.	Dr. George Wheaton.
1774. Thomas Morey, Esq.	John King. ¹	Israel Trow.	Thomas Morey, Esq.
1775. Lieut. William Cobb.	John King.	Israel Trow.	Mr. Nathan Hodges. ²
1776. William Homes, Esq.	John King.	Israel Trow.	Noah Woodward.
1777. William Homes, Esq.	John King.	Noah Wiswall.	{ Mr. Noah Woodward.
1778. Lieut. William Cobb.	John King.	Mr. Noah Wiswall.	{ Mr. Daniel Dean.
1779. William Homes, Esq.	Capt. Silas Cobb.	George Leonard, jun., Esq.	Abraham White.
1780. William Homes, Esq.	Silas Cobb.	Hon. George Leonard, Esq.	Mr. Abraham White.
		Hon. George Leonard.	Capt. Isaac Hodges. ³

¹ A vote of thanks was given "by the town to Lieut. David Williams for his good service in this town as a Clerk."

² From 1770 to 1775, Norton and the district of Mansfield were united for the choice of a representative. In 1775, a petition was sent from Mansfield to the General Court for a new precept to choose representatives. They had leave to withdraw. In 1857, the State Constitution was so amended as to choose representatives by districts, instead of towns, as formerly; and Norton and Mansfield were made District No. 2 of Bristol County for that purpose.

³ He was the first representative to the General Court, under the State Constitution.

MODERATOR.	TOWN-CLERK.	TREASURER.	REPRESENTATIVE.
1781. William Homes, Esq.	Silas Cobb.	Hon. George Leonard.	Abraham White.
1782. William Homes, Esq.	Silas Cobb.	Hon. George Leonard.	Capt. Isaac Hodges.
1783. Deacon Daniel Dean.	Silas Cobb.	Lieut. William Cobb.	Abraham White.
1784. Capt. Israel Trow.	Silas Cobb.	Lieut. William Cobb.	Capt. Israel Trow.
1785. Lieut. William Cobb.	Seth Smith, jun.	Lieut. William Cobb.	Capt. Israel Trow.
1786. Capt. John Crane.	Seth Smith, jun.	Capt. David Clap.	Seth Smith, jun.
1787. Capt. John Crane.	Seth Smith, jun.	Lieut. Ephraim Lane.	Seth Smith, jun.
1788. Capt. John Crane.	Seth Smith, jun.	Capt. Ephraim Lane.	Capt. John Crane.
1789. Capt. John Crane.	Seth Smith, jun.	Dr. Samuel Morey.	Lieut. Seth Smith, jun.
1790. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Seth Smith, jun.	Dr. Samuel Morey.	Seth Smith, jun.
1791. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Seth Smith, jun.	Dr. Samuel Morey.	Voted not to send.
1792. Capt. John Crane.	Seth Smith, jun.	Timothy Briggs, jun.	Seth Smith, jun., Esq.
1793. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Seth Smith, jun.	Samuel Morey, jun., Esq.	Voted not to send.
1794. Capt. John Crane.	Thomas Fobes.	Sannel Morey, jun., Esq.	Capt. David Clap.
1795. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Seth Smith, jun.	Seth Smith, jun.	Capt. David Clap.
1796. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Seth Smith, jun.	Brig. Silas Cobb.	Seth Smith, jun.
1797. Laban Wheaton.	Seth Smith, jun.	Gen. Silas Cobb.	Seth Smith, jun., Esq.
1798. Laban Wheaton.	Seth Smith, jun. ¹	Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Seth Smith, jun.
1799. Capt. David Clap.	Joseph Hunt.	Timothy Briggs, jun.	Seth Smith, jun.
1800. Capt. David Clap.	Joseph Hunt.	Dr. Samuel Morey.	Capt. David Clap.
1801. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Hon. George Leonard, Esq.
1802. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Hon. George Leonard, Esq.
1803. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Laban Wheaton.
1804. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Laban Wheaton, Esq.
1805. Major Brian Hall.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Laban Wheaton, Esq.
1806. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Laban Wheaton, Esq.
1807. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Laban Wheaton, Esq.
1808. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Laban Wheaton, Esq.
1809. Laban Wheaton, Esq.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Laban Wheaton, Esq.
1810. Brian Hall, Esq.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	Major Brian Hall.
1811. Laban Wheaton.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	John Hall.
			John Hall.
1812. Brian Hall.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	{ Brian Hall.
			{ Samuel Morey.

¹ He resigned Nov. 5; and Joseph Hunt was chosen in his place.

MODERATOR.	TOWN-CLERK.	TREASURER.	REPRESENTATIVE.
1813. Laban Wheaton.	Joseph Hunt.	Joseph Hunt.	{ Brian Hall.
1814. Brian Hall.	George Walker. ¹	George Walker.	{ Samuel Morey.
1815. Laban Wheaton.	George Walker.	George Walker.	{ Isaac Hodges.
1816. Brian Hall.	George Walker.	George Walker.	Voted not to send.
1817. Isaac Hodges.	George Walker.	George Walker.	Voted not to send.
1818. Isaac Hodges.	George Walker.	George Walker.	Voted not to send.
1819. Isaac Hodges.	George Walker.	George Walker.	George Walker.
1820. Ephraim Raymond.	George Walker.	George Walker.	Ephraim Raymond.
1821. Ephraim Raymond.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Voted not to send.
1822. Ephraim Raymond.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Voted not to send.
1823. Laban Wheaton.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Voted not to send.
1824. Laban Wheaton.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Laban Wheaton.
1825. Earl P. White.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Jacob Shepard.
1826. Lemuel Perry.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Laban M. Wheaton.
1827. Lemuel Perry.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	Thomas Danforth, 2d.	{ Laban M. Wheaton.
1828. Ephraim Raymond.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ Lemuel Perry.
1829. Lemuel Perry.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ Jacob Shepard.
1830. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ Lemuel Perry.
1831. Lemuel Perry.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Cromwell Leonard.
1832. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Asa Arnold. ²
1833. Ephraim Raymond.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ Asa Arnold.
			{ Cromwell Leonard.

¹ A committee chosen for that purpose, recommended that the town "Do now present the thanks of said town to Mr. Joseph Hunt, their late town-Clerk, for his ability and impartiality in serving them as their town-Clerk for fifteen years past. Amidst the heat of political debate and the unavoidable collisions of party, he has maintained a dignity which has commanded respect; practised a mildness which has conciliated esteem; and exhibited an example of deliberate candor, so becoming the man, honorable to the gentleman, and worthy of the Clerk of the town." The report was accepted.

² Mr. Arnold was chosen in November, 1831, and took his seat January, 1832, under the new arrangement, which required the political year to commence the first Wednesday of January. Hereafter we have placed the name of the representative against the year of his service; but it will be understood that he was chosen in the autumn of the previous year.

MODERATOR.	TOWN-CLERK.	TREASURER.	REPRESENTATIVE.
1834. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ Cromwell Leonard.
1835. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ John Crane.
1836. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ Cromwell Leonard.
1837. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ John Crane.
1838. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ John Crane.
1839. Aaron Lincoln, jun.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Laban M. Wheaton.
1840. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ John Crane.
1841. Daniel S. Cobb.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ Hennary Newcomb.
1842. Mason Stone.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ John Crane.
1843. Aaron Lincoln, jun.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ John Crane.
1844. Aaron Lincoln, jun.	John Crane.	John Crane.	{ John Crane.
1845. Rodolphus H. Williams.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Earl Hodges.
1846. Rodolphus H. Williams.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Earl Hodges.
1847. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Rodolphus H. Williams.
1848. Earl Hodges. ¹	John Crane.	John Crane.	No choice.
1849. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	No choice.
1850. Earl Hodges.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Rodolphus H. Williams.
1851. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	No choice.
1852. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Austin Messenger.
1853. Rodolphus H. Williams.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Andrew B. Randall.
1854. Rodolphus H. Williams.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Charles W. Hodges.
1855. Laban M. Wheaton.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Caleb S. Wetherell. ²
1856. Cromwell Leonard.	John Crane.	John Crane.	Lysander O. Makepeace.
1857. Leonard Hodges.	John Crane.	John Crane.	George B. Crane.
			Leonard Hodges.

¹ He was chosen the second day of town-meeting, on the third ballot. The first day, balloted six times without effecting a choice.

² After serving three days, he resigned his seat; and the town was unable to choose a successor.



Engraved by J. H. P.

John Greave



SELECTMEN.

- 1711. George Leonard, John Wetherell, Thomas Stephens.
- 1712. George Leonard (?), Samuel Brintnell, Nicholas White.
- 1713. George Leonard (?), John Hodges, Thomas Stephens.
- 1714. George Leonard (?), Nicholas White, John Hodges.
- 1715. John Wetherell, John Briggs, John Skinner.
- 1716. George Leonard,¹ Nicholas White, John Hodges.
- 1717. John Hodges, John Wetherell, John Skinner.
- 1718. John Hodges, sen., John Wetherell, sen., John Skinner. "East End," Thomas Randall, John Phillips.
- 1719. John Wetherell, John Hodges, John Skinner.
- 1720. John Hodges, John Wetherell, John Briggs, grand senior. "East End," John Phillips, Josiah Keith.
- 1721. John Briggs, grand senior, Benjamin Williams, John Smith, grand senior. "East End," John Phillips, Edward Howard.
- 1722. Nicholas White, Thomas Skinner, Benjamin Williams.
- 1723. Lieut. Nicholas White, Thomas Skinner, Benjamin Williams.
- 1724. Nicholas White, Samuel Hodges, Benjamin Williams.
- 1725.² George Leonard, Samuel Hodges,³ Ephraim Grover.
- 1726. Capt. Samuel Brintnell, John Briggs, 2d, Richard Briggs.
- 1727. George Leonard, Nicholas White, Eleazar Fisher.
- 1728. George Leonard, Lieut. Nicholas White, Thomas Skinner, sen.
- 1729. George Leonard, Esq., Lieut. Nicholas White, Ensign Joseph Hodges.
- 1730. Lieut. Nicholas White, Benjamin Williams, Joseph Hodges.
- 1731. John Briggs, 2d, Benjamin Williams, William Stone.
- 1732. John Wetherell, 1st, Benjamin Williams, Samuel Clap.

¹ Sept. 16, John Skinner was chosen selectman in place (?) of George Leonard, deceased.

² At the annual meeting, March 1, of this year, "Thayer was a vote caled for, for those that ware for three Selectmen to Go into the Wimin's Galery, and those that ware for five Selectmen to Go into men's Galery; and thare ware most in the Wimin's Galery." The moderator of the meeting undoubtedly wanted only three selectmen chosen; for he must have known instinctively that the largest number of men would have been found on the "wimin's" side of the house.

³ May 14, 1725, Benjamin Williams was chosen selectman "in the Roome of Samuel Hodges, deceased."

1733. Ephraim Leonard, Joseph Hodges, Samuel Clap.
1734. Ephraim Leonard, Joseph Hodges, Benjamin Williams, Mr. Samuel Clap, John Hodges.
1735. Samuel Clap, William Stone, Benjamin Williams.
1736. George Leonard, Esq., William Stone, Benjamin Williams.
1737. Ephraim Leonard, Esq., John Hodges, Simeon Wetherell.
1738. Col. George Leonard, Simeon Wetherell, Deacon Nicholas White.
1739. John Hodges, John Gilbert, Josiah Pratt.
1740. George Leonard, Esq., John Gilbert, Josiah Pratt.
1741. George Leonard, Ephraim Leonard, Joseph Hodges, John Gilbert, Josiah Pratt.
1742. George Leonard, Joseph Hodges, John Gilbert.
1743. George Leonard, Esq., Ephraim Leonard, Esq., William Dean.
1744. Capt. Simeon Wetherell, Lieut. Josiah Pratt, Lieut. William Stone.
1745. Capt. Simeon Wetherell, William Stone, Benjamin Williams, William Dean, John Andrews.
1746. Capt. Simeon Wetherell, Capt. William Stone, Capt. William Dean.
1747. Capt. Simeon Wetherell, William Dean, William Stone.
1748. Capt. William Stone, Capt. Simeon Wetherell, Capt. William Dean.
1749. Capt. Simeon Wetherell, Capt. William Stone, Capt. William Dean.
1750. Capt. William Stone, Capt. Simeon Wetherell, Capt. William Dean.
1751. George Leonard, Ephraim Leonard, Nathan Hodges.
1752. George Leonard, Esq., Nathan Hodges, Joseph Elliot.¹
1753. Hon. George Leonard, Esq., Ephraim Leonard, Esq., George Leonard, jun.
1754. Hon. George Leonard, Esq., Ephraim Leonard, Esq., George Leonard, jun., Esq.
1755. Ephraim Leonard, Esq., Lieut. Thomas Morey, Thomas Shepard, Lieut. Benjamin Pratt, Lieut. Benjamin Cobb.

¹ Thomas Fillebrown was chosen May 11, 1752, in the place of Joseph Elliot, deceased.

1756. Lieut. Thomas Morey, Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, Mr. Thomas Shepard, Mr. Isaac White, Mr. Nathan Williams.
1757. Thomas Morey, Benjamin Cobb, Ebenezer Burt.
1758. Lieut. Thomas Morey, Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, Mr. Ebenezer Burt.
1759. Capt. Thomas Morey, Capt. Benjamin Cobb, Mr. Ebenezer Burt.
1760. Capt. Thomas Morey, Capt. Benjamin Cobb, Lieut. Benjamin Pratt.
1761. George Leonard, jun., Esq., Mr. Thomas Shepard, Mr. Isaac White.
1762. George Leonard, jun., Esq., Capt. William Dean, Capt. Jonathan Eddy.
1763. George Leonard, jun., Esq., Mr. Daniel Leonard, Mr. William Cobb, Ebenezer Burt, 1st, Dr. George Wheaton.
1764. Lieut. William Cobb, Dr. George Wheaton, George Leonard, jun., Esq.
1765. Mr. William Cobb, Dr. George Wheaton, Mr. Isaac Hodges.
1766. Lieut. William Cobb, Dr. George Wheaton, Mr. Isaac Hodges.
1767. Lieut. William Cobb, Dr. George Wheaton, Mr. Isaac Hodges.
1768. Lieut. William Cobb, Dr. George Wheaton, Mr. Isaac Hodges.
1769. Lieut. William Cobb, Dr. George Wheaton, Mr. Isaac Hodges.
1770. George Leonard, jun., Esq., Dr. George Wheaton,¹ Mr. Nathan Babbit.
1771. Hon. George Leonard, jun., Esq., Mr. John Crane, Mr. Nathan Babbit.
1772. Hon. George Leonard, jun., Esq., Mr. Nathan Babbit, Mr. John Crane.
1773. Capt. William Homes, Capt. John Crane, Mr. Samuel Newcomb.
1774. William Homes, Samuel Newcomb, Isaac Hodges.
1775. Capt. William Homes, Mr. Isaac Hodges, Mr. Eleazar Clap.

¹ May 23, 1770, John Crane was chosen selectman in the place of George Wheaton, who lived in that part of Norton, which, a few days before, had been erected into the District of Mansfield.

- 1776. William Homes, Mr. Isaac Hodges, Mr. Eleazar Clap.
- 1777. William Homes, Mr. Daniel Dean, Mr. Eleazar Clap.
- 1778. William Homes, Esq., Lieut. William Cobb, Mr. Daniel Dean.
- 1779. Lieut. William Cobb, William Homes, Esq., Deacon Daniel Dean.
- 1780. Lieut. William Cobb, William Homes, Esq., Deacon Daniel Dean.
- 1781. William Homes, Esq., Lieut. William Cobb, Deacon Daniel Dean.
- 1782. Capt. Seth Smith, Capt. Israel Trow, Deacon Daniel Dean.
- 1783. Capt. Seth Smith, Capt. Israel Trow, Lieut. David Arnold.
- 1784. Capt. Israel Trow, Capt. Seth Smith, Lieut. David Arnold.
- 1785. Capt. Seth Smith, Capt. John Crane, Col. Silas Cobb.
- 1786. Capt. John Crane, Capt. Isaac Hodges, Lieut. David Arnold.
- 1787. Capt. John Crane, Capt. Isaac Hodges, Lieut. David Arnold.
- 1788. Capt. John Crane, Lieut. David Arnold, Lieut. Jacob Shepard.
- 1789. Capt. John Crane, Capt. Ephraim Lane, Lieut. Jacob Shepard.
- 1790. Capt. John Crane, Capt. Ephraim Lane, Jacob Shepard.
- 1791. Capt. John Crane, Capt. Ephraim Lane, jun., Lieut. Jacob Shepard.
- 1792. Capt. John Crane, Capt. Ephraim Lane, jun., Capt. David Clap.
- 1793. Capt. Ephraim Lane, Capt. Israel Trow, Capt. David Clap.
- 1794. Capt. David Clap, Ephraim Lane, Capt. Tisdale Hodges.
- 1795. Capt. David Clap, Capt. Tisdale Hodges, Isaac Hodges, jun.
- 1796. Deacon Daniel Dean, Tisdale Hodges, Isaac Hodges, jun.
- 1797. Capt. Tisdale Hodges, Isaac Hodges, jun., Elisha Cobb.
- 1798. Isaac Hodges, jun., Elisha Cobb, David Lincoln, jun.
- 1799. Capt. Tisdale Hodges, Isaac Hodges, jun., Lieut. Elisha Cobb.

1800. Isaac Hodges, jun., Lieut. John Hall, Capt. Tisdale Hodges.
1801. Isaac Hodges, jun., Lieut. John Hall, William Burt.
1802. William Burt, Lieut. John Hodges, Major Brian Hall.
1803. William Burt, Samuel Hunt, Jonathan Hodges.
1804. William Burt, Capt. Jonathan Hodges, Capt. Samuel Hunt.
1805. Capt. Samuel Hunt, Capt. Jonathan Hodges, Major Brian Hall.
1806. Capt. Jonathan Hodges, Laban Wheaton, Esq., Capt. Samuel Hunt.
1807. Laban Wheaton, Esq., Capt. Samuel Hunt, Major Brian Hall.
1808. Laban Wheaton, Brian Hall, Samuel Hunt.
1809. Isaac Hodges, Major Brian Hall, Capt. Samuel Hunt.
1810. Brian Hall, Isaac Hodges, Samuel Hunt.
1811. Isaac Hodges, Samuel Hunt, Samuel Copeland.
1812. Samuel Copeland, Isaac Hodges, Samuel Hunt.
1813. Isaac Hodges, Samuel Copeland, Samuel Hunt.
1814. Isaac Hodges, Seth Hodges, Jonathan Newland.
1815. Isaac Hodges, Lysander Makepeace, Daniel Lane.
1816. Isaac Hodges, Lysander Makepeace, Seth Hodges.
1817. Isaac Hodges, Seth Hodges, Lysander Makepeace.
1818. Seth Hodges, Lysander Makepeace, Daniel Lane.
1819. Seth Hodges, Daniel Lane, Lemuel Arnold.
1820. Daniel Lane, Seth Hodges, Lemuel Arnold.
1821. Lemuel Arnold, Lemuel Perry, Jacob Shepard.
1822. Lemuel Arnold, Lemuel Perry, Jacob Shepard.
1823. Lemuel Perry, Jacob Shepard, Thomas Braman.
1824. Lemuel Perry, Lemuel Arnold, Jacob Shepard.
1825. Lemuel Perry, Jacob Shepard, Daniel Patten.
1826. Lemuel Perry, Jacob Shepard, Daniel Patten.
1827. Lemuel Perry, Daniel Patten, Oliver Hunt.
1828. Oliver Hunt, Williams Hodges, Calvin Lane.
1829. Sylvester Newcomb, Cromwell Leonard, Jacob Shepard.
1830. Sylvester Newcomb, Cromwell Leonard, Jacob Shepard.
1831. Cromwell Leonard, Sylvester Newcomb, William Lane, jun.
1832. Cromwell Leonard, Sylvester Newcomb, William Lane, jun.
1833. Cromwell Leonard, Sylvester Newcomb, William Lane, jun.

- 1834. Cromwell Leonard, Sylvester Newcomb, William Lane, jun.
- 1835. Cromwell Leonard, Simeon Blandin, Seth Hodges.
- 1836. Seth Hodges, Cromwell Leonard, Simeon Blandin.
- 1837. Cromwell Leonard, Simeon Blandin, Leonard Hodges, jun.
- 1838. Leonard Hodges, jun., Hennary Newcomb, Richard F. Sweet.
- 1839. Hennary Newcomb, Daniel Briggs, Leonard Hodges, jun.
- 1840. George B. Crane, Jacob Shepard, Earl Hodges.
- 1841. George B. Crane, Jacob Shepard, Earl Hodges.
- 1842. George B. Crane, Jacob Shepard, Earl Hodges.
- 1843. George B. Crane, Jacob Shepard, Almond Tucker.
- 1844. Almond Tucker, Rodolphus H. Williams, Hiram J. Hunt.
- 1845. Hiram J. Hunt, Eddy Lincoln, Cyrus White.
- 1846. George B. Crane, Almond Tucker, Cyrus White.
- 1847. Seth Sumner, jun., George B. Crane, Almond Tucker.
- 1848. George B. Crane, Seth Sumner, jun., David Arnold.
- 1849. George B. Crane, Seth Sumner, jun., David Arnold.
- 1850. George B. Crane, Seth Sumner, jun., David Arnold.
- 1851. Daniel S. Cobb, Eli Wood, Benjamin S. Hall.
- 1852. Daniel S. Cobb, Eli Wood, Benjamin S. Hall.
- 1853. Daniel S. Cobb, Charles H. Briggs, John B. Newcomb.
- 1854. Earl C. White, Elkanah Wheeler, Augustus Lane.
- 1855. Ebenezer Tinkham, Royal P. Hodges, Hiram H. Wetherell.
- 1856. Augustus Lane, James O. Messinger, James Allen.
- 1857. Augustus Lane, James O. Messinger, James Allen.

ASSESSORS.

We cannot ascertain that any assessors were chosen as such for several years after the incorporation of the town. The first allusion to them on the town-records was at the annual meeting, March 2, 1719, when the town "made choise of [the persons whose names are given below] to be assesors."

Thenceforward they were annually chosen, for a hundred and nineteen years. In 1839, it was voted not to choose assessors. Since, they have been chosen

only two or three years ; but the selectmen have performed their duties.

- 1719. John Hodges, John Wetherell, John Skinner.
- 1720. John Skinner, Samuel Hodges, John Briggs, sen.
"East Precinct," Josiah Keith, John Daley, Timothy Cooper.
- 1721. John Andrews, Jonathan Lincoln, Eleazar Eddy.
- 1722. Jonathan Lincoln, John Andrews, Eleazar Eddy.
- 1723. Jonathan Lincoln, Joseph Hodges, John Andrews.
- 1724. Eleazar Eddy, Joseph Hodges, Nathan Hodges.
- 1725. Joseph Hodges, Nathan Hodges, William Stone.
- 1726. Eleazar Eddy, Simeon Wetherell, Jeremiah Newland.
- 1727. Joseph Hodges, Simeon Wetherell, Jeremiah Newland.
- 1728. John Briggs, 2d, John Skinner, Jeremiah Newland.
- 1729. John Briggs, 2d, John Skinner, Jeremiah Newland.
- 1730. Ephraim Leonard, Simeon Wetherell, Nathan Hodges.
- 1731. John Wetherell, sen., John Skinner, sen., Ephraim Leonard.
- 1732. John Briggs, 2d, John Skinner, Ephraim Leonard.
- 1733. John Briggs, 2d, William Dean, John Andrews.
- 1734. William Dean, Benjamin Cobb, John Briggs, 2d.
- 1735. Benjamin Williams, Jonathan Lincoln, Benjamin Cobb.
- 1736. John Andrews, Jonathan Lincoln, Benjamin Cobb.
- 1737. John Andrews, William Dean, Benjamin Cobb.
- 1738. Benjamin Cobb, William Dean, Nathan Hodges.
- 1739. John Andrews, Nathan Hodges, William Dean.
- 1740. William Dean, Benjamin Cobb, Simeon Wetherell.
- 1741. Benjamin Cobb, William Dean, Simeon Wetherell.
- 1742. John Andrews, David Williams, Benjamin Lane.
- 1743. Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, Ensign William Dean, Jonathan Lawrence.
- 1744. Jonathan Lawrence, Benjamin Cobb, Benjamin Pratt.
- 1745. Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, Benjamin Pratt, David Williams.
- 1746. Benjamin Cobb, David Williams, Benjamin Pratt.
- 1747. Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, Benjamin Pratt, David Williams.
- 1748. Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, Benjamin Pratt, David Williams.
- 1749. Benjamin Cobb, David Williams, Benjamin Pratt.
- 1750. Benjamin Cobb, David Williams, Benjamin Pratt.

- 1751. Thomas Fillebrown, David Williams, John Fisher.
- 1752. Thomas Morey, Isaac White, David Williams.
- 1753. George Leonard, jun., David Williams, Jonathan Newcomb.
- 1754. Thomas Morey, David Williams, Jonathan Newcomb.
- 1755. Major George Leonard, Joseph Hodges, Isaac White.
- 1756. Lieut. Benjamin Cobb, Lieut. Thomas Morey, David Williams.
- 1757. Isaac White, Seth Gilbert, David Williams.
- 1758. Benjamin Cobb, Isaac White, David Williams.
- 1759. Capt. Benjamin Cobb, Mr. Isaac White, Seth Gilbert.
- 1760. Capt. Thomas Morey, Lieut. Benjamin Pratt, Isaac Hodges.
- 1761. Major Thomas Morey, Lieut. Benjamin Pratt, Mr. Isaac Hodges.
- 1762. David Williams, William Cobb, Isaac White.
- 1763. George Leonard, jun., Esq., Lieut. Isaac White, Mr. John Crane.
- 1764. Brian Hall, Seth Gilbert, George Wheaton.
- 1765. Mr. Daniel Leonard, Mr. Noah Wiswell, Mr. John King.
- 1766. Dr. Gideon Tiffany, Mr. Elkanah Lincoln, Mr. Daniel Leonard.
- 1767. Ephraim Hodges, Isaac Dean, Seth Williams.
- 1768. George Leonard, jun., Esq., David Williams, Dr. George Wheaton.
- 1769. John Crane, Dr. George Wheaton, Seth Gilbert.
- 1770. John Crane, John King, Benjamin Williams.¹
- 1771. Mr. John Crane, Mr. Record Franklin, Mr. Silas Cobb.
- 1772. John Patten, Record Franklin, John King.
- 1773. David Clap, Capt. William Homes, John King.
- 1774. Isaac Hodges, John Patten, John King.
- 1775. Lieut. Nathan Babbitt, Mr. Noah Wiswall, Mr. Isaac Hodges.
- 1776. John King, Mr. John Patten, Mr. Record Franklin.
- 1777. Capt. Silas Cobb,² Mr. John Patten, Lieut. Brian Hall.

¹ May 23, 1770, Seth Williams was chosen assessor in the place (?) of Benjamin Williams, who lived in that part of Norton that had recently been erected into the District of Mansfield.

² Nov. 17, 1777, Capt. Seth Gilbert was chosen assessor in the place of Capt. Silas Cobb, who was absent in the army.

- 1778. William Homes, Esq., Lieut. William Cobb, Mr. Daniel Dean.
- 1779. Lieut. William Cobb, William Homes, Esq., Deacon Daniel Dean.
- 1780. Capt. Israel Trow, Capt. Seth Smith, Capt. Isaac Hodges.
- 1781. George Leonard, Esq., Capt. Israel Trow, Silas Cobb.
- 1782. George Leonard, Esq., Silas Cobb, Capt. Israel Trow.
- 1783. Silas Cobb, Capt. Israel Trow, Capt. David Clap.
- 1784. Capt. Silas Cobb, Capt. Israel Trow, Capt. David Clap.
- 1785. Capt. John Crane, Mr. William Burt, Capt. Isaac Hodges.
- 1786. Capt. John Crane, Capt. Isaac Hodges, Joseph Hunt.
- 1787. Joseph Hunt, Capt. John Crane, Capt. Isaac Hodges.
- 1788. Josiah Woodward, Joseph Hunt, Eleazar Walker.
- 1789. William Burt, Lieut. Seth Smith, jun., Joshua Pond.
- 1790. William Burt, Lieut. Seth Smith, Joshua Pond.
- 1791. Joshua Pond, Capt. David Clap, Capt. Israel Trow.
- 1792. Capt. David Clap, Lieut. Elisha Cobb, Joseph Hunt, Isaac Hodges, jun., Joshua Pond.
- 1793. Capt. David Clap, Elisha Cobb, Joshua Pond.
- 1794. Elisha Cobb, Joshua Pond, Isaac Hodges, jun.
- 1795. Brig. Silas Cobb, Elisha Cobb, Brian Hall.
- 1796. Noah Clap, Elisha Cobb, Brian Hall.
- 1797. Noah Clap, Brian Hall, Joshua Pond.
- 1798. Joshua Pond, Noah Clap, Brian Hall.
- 1799. Timothy Briggs, jun., William Burt, Capt. Jonathan Hodges.
- 1800. Major Brian Hall, Lieut. John Hall, Capt. Jonathan Hodges.
- 1801. Capt. Jonathan Hodges, Major Brian Hall, Lieut. Elisha Cobb, Lieut. Rufus Hodges, Lieut. Samuel Hunt.
- 1802. Major Brian Hall, Lieut. Elisha Cobb, Capt. Samuel Hunt.
- 1803. Brian Hall, Samuel Hunt, David Arnold.
- 1804. Major Brian Hall, Capt. Samuel Hunt, John Arnold.
- 1805. Major Brian Hall, Capt. Samuel Hunt, John Arnold.
- 1806. John Arnold, William Verry, Brian Hall.
- 1807. Major Brian Hall, Lieut. William Verry, Lieut. John Hall.
- 1808. Brian Hall, William Verry, Samuel Hunt.
- 1809. Brian Hall, William Verry, Samuel Hunt.

- 1810. Brian Hall, Samuel Hunt, William Verry.
- 1811. Brian Hall, Samuel Hunt, William Verry.
- 1812. Brian Hall, William Verry, Samuel Hunt.
- 1813. Brian Hall, Isaac Hodges, Samuel Hunt.
- 1814. Seth Hodges, Daniel Smith, Jonathan Newland.
- 1815. Brian Hall, Isaac Hodges, Samuel Hunt.
- 1816. Brian Hall, Isaac Hodges, Samuel Hunt.
- 1817. Isaac Hodges, Seth Hodges, Samuel Hunt.
- 1818. Isaac Hodges, Seth Hodges, Daniel Patten.
- 1819. Isaac Hodges, Seth Hodges, Lemuel Perry.
- 1820. Isaac Hodges, Seth Hodges, Lemuel Perry.
- 1821. Isaac Hodges, Lemuel Perry, Seth Hodges.
- 1822. Daniel Lane, Richard Newcomb, Williams Hodges.
- 1823. Daniel Lane, Williams Hodges, Richard Newcomb.
- 1824. Williams Hodges, Daniel Shepard, George Walker.
- 1825. Williams Hodges, Daniel Shepard, George Walker.
- 1826. Jacob Shepard, Daniel Lane, John L. Munro, jun.
- 1827. Jacob Shepard, John L. Munro, jun., Elkanah Wood.
- 1828. John L. Munro, jun., Daniel Lane, Williams Hodges.
- 1829. Sylvester Newcomb, Cromwell Leonard, Jacob Shepard.
- 1830. Sylvester Newcomb, Cromwell Leonard, Jacob Shepard.
- 1831. Williams Hodges, Hennary Newcomb, Daniel Briggs, jun.
- 1832. William Lane, jun., Sylvester Newcomb, Cromwell Leonard.
- 1833. Cromwell Leonard, Sylvester Newcomb, William Lane, jun.
- 1834. Cromwell Leonard, Sylvester Newcomb, William Lane, jun.
- 1835. Cromwell Leonard, Simeon Blandin, Seth Hodges.
- 1836. Seth Hodges, Cromwell Leonard, Simeon Blandin.
- 1837. Cromwell Leonard, Simeon Blandin, Leonard Hodges, jun.
- 1838. Leonard Hodges, jun., Hennary Newcomb, Richard F. Sweet.

TITHING-MEN AND WARDENS.

As early as 1679, in the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay,¹ it was ordered that tithing-men should be

¹ See Records, vol. v. p. 240.

annually chosen in the towns “of their most prudent & discreet inhabitants,” to inspect all licensed or unlicensed houses, “where they shall haue notice, or haue ground to suspect, that any person or persons doe spend their tyme or estates, by night or by day, in tipling, gaming, or otheruise vnprofitably ; or doe sell, by retayle, strong drinke, wine, ale, cidar, rumn, brandey, perry, matheglin, & without license.” All such disorderly houses they were requested to search ; and if any of these liquors were found therein, and the owners could not give “satisfactory account of their having the same,” either with or without warrant, they were empowered to seize said liquors and carry them off, and to institute legal proceedings against the parties on whose premises the liquors were found. The tithing-men were also requested “to inspect the manners of all disorderly persons ;” and to present to some magistrate “the names of all single persons that live from under family government, stubborne and disorderly children and servants, night-walkers, typlers, Saboath-breakers, by night or by day, and such as absent themselves from the publicke worship of God on the Lord’s dayes ;” and all persons whose conduct tended “to debauchery, irreligion, prophaness, & atheisme.”

The tithing-men’s badge of office was “a black Staff, of two foot long, tipt at one End with Brass about three Inches ; to be provided by the selectmen, at the Charge of the Town.”

Sept. 8, 1741, there was “voted to Jonathan Leonard, for 2 tithing-men’s Staves, £00—02.”

In 1760, an Act passed to prevent “The Prophanation of the Lord’s day ;” which required that from two to six persons, “of good substance, and of sober Life and conversation,” called wardens, should be chosen annually, whose duty it was to see that the sabbath was duly observed in all public-houses and elsewhere ; and to examine all persons suspected of unnecessary travelling on Sunday, &c.

They were probably called wardens, from the fact

that Boston was required to choose one from each ward in the town. The penalty for not choosing them in each town was *fifty pounds*. Their badge of office was a "white wand, not less than seven Feet in length." It will be seen that their duties were similar to those of the tithing-men. For a year or two after the Act requiring wardens to be chosen was passed, no tithing-men were chosen in Norton. Subsequently, a portion of the time, both tithing-men and wardens were chosen. We here transcribe the names of the "prudent & discreet" persons, and those "of sober Life and Conversation," who have been chosen tithing-men and wardens: those of the latter we put in *Italics*. The town voted not to choose tithing-men in 1839. Subsequently, none have been chosen, we believe, with the exception of the year 1850, when Eli. C. Wood was elected.

- 1716. John Austin, Richard Briggs, (Clement Briggs).¹
- 1717. Seth Dorman, Isaac Shepard, (Thomas Randall).
- 1718. William Wetherell, sen., John Smith, jun., Thomas
• Grover, (Ephraim Manuel).
- 1719. Ephraim Lane, Joshua Lincoln, (William Manley).
- 1720. John Newland, Peter Aldrich, (Israel Randall).
- 1721. Ebenezer Burt, Samuel Clap, (Benjamin Drake).
- 1722. John Briggs, sen., Richard Briggs.
- 1723. John Briggs, sen., Richard Briggs, (Benjamin Drake).
- 1724. John Briggs, sen., Seth Dorman, Thomas Manley.
- 1725. John Briggs, sen., Joseph Pitee, Israel Randall.
- 1726. Joseph Gray, Joseph Godfrey, Ephraim Lane.
- 1727. John Briggs, 2d, Richard Briggs.
- 1728. Ebenezer Eddy, John Briggs, 1st, Joseph Pitee.
- 1729. Samuel Clap, Josiah Pratt, Joseph Gray.
- 1730. Thomas Skinner, sen., John Wild, William Codington.
- 1731. Josiah Atherton, James Leonard, Benjamin Seele.
- 1732. John Harvey, John Newland, 2d, Isaac Welman.
- 1733. Benjamin Cobb, Solomon Skinner, John Austin, jun.,
William Haradon.

¹ Those names enclosed in parentheses were for the East Precinct, now Easton.

1734. John Andrews, Ephraim Dunham, William Bassett, Jonathan Pratt.
1735. Stephen Blanchard, Joseph Gray, John Cobb, John Barney.
1736. Ebenezer Welman, Benjamin Seele.
1737. Isaac Welman, Ebenezer Burt.
1738. William Paine, Thomas Shepard.
1739. William Paine, Samuel Phillips.
1740. Samuel Clap, Ebenezer Brintnell.
1741. George Allen, John Wetherell, 3d.
1742. Gideon Bassett, Benjamin Copeland.
1743. James Briggs, Samuel Titus.
1744. John King, Joseph Elliot.
1745. Ephraim Lane, 2d, Eliphalet Hodges, Stephen Blanchard.
1746. Benjamin Hews, Nicholas White, Timothy Briggs.
1747. Stephen Blanchard, Jonathan Burt, Uriah Leonard.
1748. John Fisher, Seth Smith, Nathaniel Brintnell.
1749. John Briggs, 2d, William Codington, Thomas Fillebrown, Ephraim Lane.
1750. William Codington, Joseph Elliot, Gideon Bassett, Joseph Hodges.
1751. Seth Smith, Samuel Elliot.
1752. Thomas Fillebrown.
1753. Seth Smith, Thomas Fillebrown.
1754. Nathaniel Fisher, Joseph Newland.
1755. Ebenezer Grover, Nathan Williams, Sylvanus Braman, Paul Cook, Timothy Briggs.
1756. John Fisher, Benjamin Newcomb, James Grover.
1757. William Paine, jun., Jonathan Knap.
1758. Joshua Atherton, Ephraim Hodges.
1759. Phineas Grover, William Newcomb.
1760. John Briggs, Deacon Samuel Dean, Capt. William Dean, James Fillebrown.
1761. *Benjamin Pearson, John Briggs, Benjamin White, William Paine, 2d.*
1762. *Jonathan Burt, Sylvanus Braman, Mr. Nathan Williams.*
1763. *Israel Woodward, Job White.*
1764. Meletiah Washburn, Samuel Fillebrown, *Abijah Fisher, Gershom Cambell, Nathan Williams.*
1765. David Arnold, William Paine, 2d, *John White, 1st, William Basset, jun.*

1766. Timothy Briggs, John White, 2d, *John Wetherell, jun., George Briggs, Elijah Dean.*
1767. *Ebenezer Brintnell, Capt. Jonathan Hodges, William Cambell.*
1768. Meletiah Washburn, Timothy Smith, Samuel Fillebrown, *David Arnold, William Carpenter, jun., James Fillebrown.*
1769. Dr. Gideon Tiffany, Thomas Grover, *Record Franklin, David Arnold, Benjamin Day, Eleazer Williams.*
1770. *Stephen Pond, John Patten.*
1771. Isaac Williams, Meletiah Washburn, *John Eddy, Samuel Hunt.*
1772. Seth Williams, *James Gilbert, Silas Cobb.*
1773. *John Patten, Josiah Woodward.*
1774. *Samuel Hunt, Silas Cobb.*
1775. *William Makepeace, Hezekiah Willard.*
1776. *Daniel Knap, Joseph Burt.*
1777. *Meletiah Washburn, Simeon Briggs.*
1778. *Joseph Burt, Noah Woodward.*
1779. *Meletiah Washburn, Timothy Briggs.*
1780. *Capt. Silas Cobb, Capt. Israel Trow.*
1781. *Elkanah Lincoln, jr., Nathan Babbit, Nathaniel Prior.*
1782. *James Hodges, Elijah Danforth.*
1783. *Seth Smith, jun., Tisdale Hodges.*
1784. *Abiathar Shaw, Benjamin Braman.*
1785. *Nathaniel Freeman, Elisha Cobb.*
1786. *William Verry, Isaac Bassett.*
1787. *Nathan Perry, Jonathan Briggs.*
1788. *Samuel Copeland, Thomas Braman.*
1789. Timothy Briggs, Benjamin Wild, *Benjamin Blandin, Benjamin Puffer.*
1790. Benjamin Wild, William Morey, *Isaac Hodges, Daniel Phillips.*
1791. Jonathan Clap, 2d, Samuel Hunt, *John Gilbert, William Makepeace.*
1792. Thomas Braman, Isaac Bassett.
1793. Elisha Cobb, Thomas Braman.
1794. Daniel Briggs, Nathan Perry.
1795. Capt. Titus, Isaac Burt.
1796. Jonathan Leonard, Asa Copeland.
1797. Ichabod Perry, Benjamin Puffer.
1798. Daniel Lane, Luther Lincoln.
1799. Ephraim Raymond, Benjamin Horton.

1800. Lieut. Abiel Lincoln, Lysander Makepeace.
1801. Thomas Leonard, Daniel Bassett.
1802. Josiah Hodges, jun., Araunah Smith.
1803. Daniel Bassett, Daniel Lane.
1804. Zopher Skinner, Asa Knowles.
1805. Thomas Braman, jun., David Hodges.
1806. Josiah Hunt, Capt. Daniel Knapp.
1807. Capt. Thomas Danforth, Daniel Knapp, David Makepeace, Benjamin King.
1808. Seth Babbitt, Jonathan Clapp.
1809. No record of choice.
1810. Abiel Lincoln, Nathaniel Stone, jun.
1811. No record of choice.
1812. Abiel Lincoln, David Makepeace, Daniel Bassett.
1813. George Gilbert, Zopher Skinner.
1814. David Makepeace, Timothy Briggs.
1815. Daniel Smith, Jonathan Newland.
1816. Lysander Makepeace, John Dean, Daniel Shepard.
1817. Abiel Lincoln, Nathaniel Stone, jun., Thomas Braman, Zopher Skinner.
1818. Terrel Cobb, William Burt, John Hall, jun., Abiel Lincoln.
1819. David Woodward, Zopher Skinner.
1820. Zopher Skinner, Bartholomew Burt.
1821. Simeon Briggs, David Field, David Makepeace.
1822. Joseph Hill, Capt. Thomas Braman, Cromwell Leonard, Sylvanus Braman.
1823. Joseph Hill, Asa Danforth, Cromwell Leonard.
1824. William Lane, Joseph Hill, David Makepeace.
1825. Cromwell Leonard, Ephraim Allen, Bartholomew Burt, Joseph Snow.
1826. Josiah Harvey.
1827. Asa Adams.
1828. Isaac Woodward.
1829. Deacon Asa Copeland.
1830. Laban M. Wheaton.
1831. No record of choice.
1832. Richard F. Sweet.
1833. Laban M. Wheaton.
1834. Leavit Bates.
1835. Leavit Bates.
1836. Asa P. Holmes.
1837. Leavit Bates.

CORONERS.

Most of the facts relating to coroners and deputy-sheriffs, I have taken from the "Massachusetts State Register," commencing in 1784. From another source, I find that Isaac Hodges was coroner in 1757; and, without doubt, was in office till 1792 or 93. Isaac Hodges, jun., was coroner from 1794 to 1825; Lemuel Perry, 1816 to 1818; Cromwell Leonard, from 1819 to 1821, and from 1838 to the present time.

DEPUTY-SHERIFFS.

Benjamin Williams was deputy-sheriff in 1757. How long he held the office, we know not. Ephraim Burr is believed to have been sheriff from some years previous to 1784, up to 1803; Isaac Morey, from 1791 to 1796; Thomas Fobes, from 1794 to 1796; William Verry, most of the time from 1800 to 1815; George Gilbert, from 1803 to 1805; Ebenezer Titus, from 1803 to 1808; Preston Hodges, from 1818 to 1821; Daniel Smith, 2d, from 1822 to 1824; George Clapp, from 1822 to 1824; Daniel Morey, in 1825; Timothy Smith, from 1826 to 1834; Horace B. Wetherell, from 1835 to 1850; Austin Messinger, from 1851 to 1853, and again in 1856. Cyril S. Sweet was appointed in 1858, and is now in office.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

Those marked (*) were afterwards justices of the peace and quorum. Those marked (†) have been justices throughout the Commonwealth.

Names.	Appointed.	Names.	Appointed.
George Leonard . . .	June 5, 1713.	Laban Wheaton* . . .	Aug. 6, 1789.
George Leonard* . . .	Mar. 4, 1723.	Seth Smith, jun. . .	May 10, 1791.
Ephraim Leonard*	1737.	Samuel Morey, jun. . .	Jan. 11, 1792.
Geo. Leonard, jr.*† . .	Jan. 25, 1754.	Ephraim Raymond* .	Feb. 11, 1801.
Thomas Morey . . .	Feb. 4, 1762.	Silas Cobb	Before 1804. ¹
George Wheaton . .	Feb. 3, 1774.	William Burt	Mar. 5, 1808.
William Homes . . .	Aug. 29, 1776.	Brian Hall	June 21, 1809.
Samuel Morey* . . .	Jan. 9, 1789.	Thos. Danforth, 2d .	May 16, 1810.

¹ We cannot find the date of his appointment. His commission was renewed in 1809. For some years previous to 1800, he was doubtless *ex-officio* justice, in consequence of his being high in military office.

Names.	Appointed.	Names.	Appointed.
George Gilbert . . .	Feb. 21, 1811.	Daniel S. Cobb . . .	Feb. 23, 1843.
John Hall . . .	Feb. 22, 1811.	Hennary Newcomb .	Feb. 23, 1843.
Daniel Parker . . .	Oct. 26, 1812.	Eddy Lincoln . . .	Mar. 24, 1843.
Isaac Hodges . . .	Feb. 2, 1815.	Leonard Hodges . .	April 15, 1850.
Joseph Hodges . . .	Jan. 7, 1825.	George B. Crane . .	Mar. 26, 1851.
Laban M. Wheaton†	Jan. 26, 1828.	Earl Hodges	April 2, 1851.
Lemuel Perry . . .	Feb. 1, 1828.	John Arnold	Aug. 6, 1853.
Jacob Shepard* . . .	Feb. 19, 1829.	Zeno Kelly	Jan. 27, 1855.
Cromwell Leonard* .	Dec. 11, 1830.	Royal P. Hodges . .	Mar. 24, 1855.
George Clapp	May 31, 1833.	L. O. Makepeace . .	Aug. 29, 1856.
John Crane	Jan. 8, 1841.	Thos. T. Rockwood .	Feb. 26, 1858.

STATE SENATORS.

Hon. ABRAHAM WHITE was chosen senator in 1787, and again in 1788. He is believed to have been the son of Thomas White, of Taunton; and tradition says he was descended from Peregrine White, the first English child born at Plymouth. He was a somewhat eccentric man, and could not read or write; but was possessed of much native talent, practical good sense, and sound judgment. He was much employed in public life, where energy, and decision of character, were needed. Numerous anecdotes are related of him, all of which illustrate his ready wit, keen satire, and ability to meet any emergency that arose. He lived at the easterly part of the town, a short distance below where Isaac Woodward now lives. He married, first, a daughter of John Holmes, of Taunton, by whom he had a son; who, with his mother, died young. For second wife, Mr. White married Hannah, daughter of Edward White, of Easton; and had by her eight children. He died Feb. 20, 1801, in his eighty-fifth year; so that he must have been born in 1717.

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD was chosen senator in 1793, and served one year only. (For notice of him, see Collegiate History.)

Hon. SETH SMITH, Jun., was chosen senator in 1797, and held the office but one year. He was the son of Deacon Seth Smith (already mentioned) by his first wife, Sarah Cobb, 2d; and was born Oct. 1, 1756. He married, March 16, 1780, Rachel Newcomb; and had three children. He was much employed in public

business; was town-clerk many years; also representative to the General Court. He kept a store in the centre of the town a few years. He left Norton about 1799, and went to New-York City, where he is believed to have died some thirty or forty years ago.

Hon. CROMWELL LEONARD was chosen senator for the year 1848, and rechosen for the year 1849. He is the son of Jonathan Leonard by his second wife, — Rebecca Smith, 2d; and was born Dec. 1, 1788. He is the grandson of Jacob and Mary (Wild) Leonard; and is descended from the Taunton Leonards, who came from Pontypool, Wales (see p. 85). Mr. Leonard married, June 15, 1815, Miss Belinda Copeland, of Mansfield. They had four children. She died Aug. 25, 1848. He married for second wife, June 20, 1849, Miss Harriet Morse, of East Cambridge, daughter of the late Dr. Caleb Morse, of Moultonborough, N.H. Mr. Leonard has enjoyed the confidence of his fellow-citizens in an eminent degree; having served the town many years as moderator of town-meetings, selectman, assessor, representative to the General Court, and other positions of trust and respectability.

Hon. JOHN CRANE was chosen senator for the year 1852. He is the son of Terry and Rebecca (Harvey) Crane, grandson of John and Rachel (Terry) Crane; and was born Jan. 11, 1799. He married, March 28, 1825, Miss Sally Harvey, of Taunton; and has had two children. Mr. Crane has ever been very popular with his townsmen. He held the office of town-clerk and treasurer for thirty successive years; which is nine years longer than any other person has continued in either office in town. When chosen for the thirtieth time, in 1857, he declined a re-election. He has represented the town in the General Court, wholly or in part, ten years.

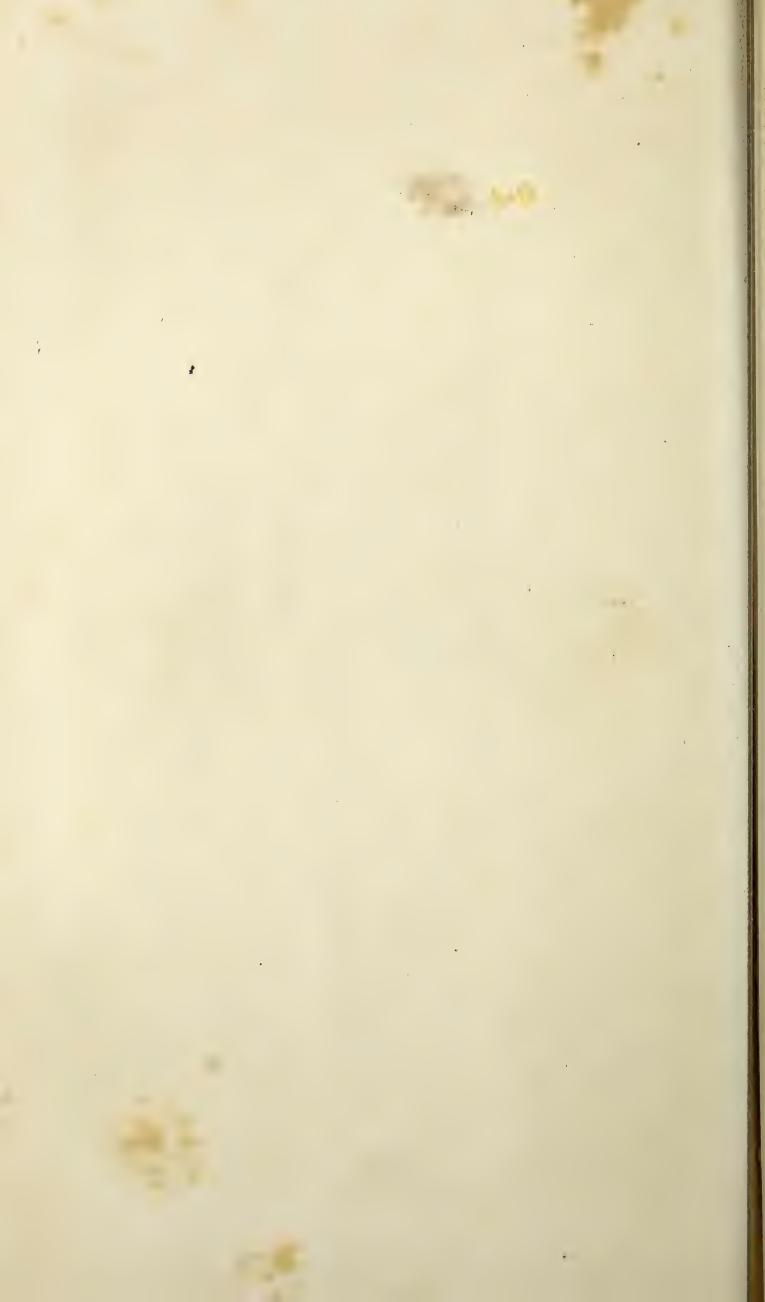
COUNCILLORS.

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD was a royal councillor twenty-five successive years; commencing his term of service



L. Crozier lith. Boston.

Cromwell Leonard



in 1741, and closing in 1766. He was the son of Major George and Anna (Tisdale) Leonard (whom we have noticed among the early settlers, p. 85), and was the first male child born in the westerly part of Norton. His advent into the world took place March 4, 1698. He was the second justice of the peace in town; was town-clerk many years; and also otherwise much employed in public affairs, as selectman, assessor, moderator of town-meetings, representative to the General Court, &c. He was also much engaged in the military affairs of this neighborhood, having risen from a subordinate officer to the command of the regiment; and is generally known as "Colonel George Leonard." He was appointed Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in 1725, and held the office till 1730. He was re-appointed to the same office in 1733, and held it till 1740, when he was dismissed for having been connected with the Land-Bank scheme. He was again appointed to the bench in 1746, and continued in office till about the commencement of the Revolution. A portion of the time he was on the bench, he was Chief-Justice of the Court.¹ He was appointed Judge of Probate for Bristol County, Feb. 16, 1747; and held the office about thirty-one years. Tradition has universally given him a character above reproach, and represented him to be a man of much practical wisdom and of sterling worth; and the fact that he was almost constantly in public office, from the age of twenty-one to the close of fourscore years, serves to strengthen this idea. Rev. Pitt Clarke says, "He appears to have been distinguished for his urbanity, practical piety, and active benevolence. The praise of his many good deeds, in the church and through the county, has long been identified with Norton, and will be co-extensive with the history of this place." He married, in 1721, Miss Rachel Clap, of Scituate; and they had four children. He died Dec. 4, 1778, in the eighty-first year of his age. His wife died

¹ Judicial History of Massachusetts, by Hon. Emory Washburn, p. 369.

April 23, 1783, in her eighty-second year. His picture we have placed as the frontispiece of this book.

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD, Jun., was councillor from 1770 to 1775. He was the son of Col. Leonard, just mentioned. (See Collegiate History.)

Hon. LABAN M. WHEATON held the office of councillor two years; viz., 1857 and 1858. (See Collegiate History.)

JUDGES OF COURT OF COMMON PLEAS.

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD was appointed to this office, Dec. 10, 1715; and was on the bench only a few months, when he died. (See early settlers, p. 85.)

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD, son of the above, was judge most of the time from 1725 to 1775. (See councillors.)

Hon. EPHRAIM LEONARD was appointed judge in 1747, and was in office till about the commencement of the Revolution. He was a brother of George Leonard, last named; and was born Jan. 16, 1705-6. He settled in the North Precinct of Norton, now called East Mansfield. He was a man of great energy, and decision of character, and was much employed in town-affairs; and held the office of colonel in the militia during the old French and Indian war, and is generally known as "Colonel Ephraim Leonard." He married, first, Judith Perkins, of Norwich, Conn., May 28, 1739; and they had one son, Daniel. She died Sept. 4, 1740. His second wife was Meletiah, who "had been ye wife of Jonathan Ware, Esqr., and of Benjamin Ware, M.D., of Wrentham."¹ Her maiden name was Fisher; and she died Oct. 3, 1758. His third wife was Mrs. Abigail (King) Williams, married March 18, 1760. "She had been the wife of Mr. John Williams,"¹ of Easton. She died July 27, 1771; and was buried beside her first husband, at Easton, near the late Daniel Wheaton's estate. His fourth wife was Anna, who "had been the wife of Mr.

¹ Gravestone.

Elisha Woodwarth, and also of ye Revd. Mr. Timothy Ruggles,"¹ of Rochester. She died Oct. 7, 1782. He died May 2, 1786; and, with three of his wives, lies buried in a grove, about half a mile easterly from his former residence at East Mansfield. But his own, and the gravestones of his wives, lying flat on the ground, are nearly covered up with the earth and leaves.

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD was appointed Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, July 1, 1785. In 1798, he was Chief-Justice of the Court, and was on the bench as late as 1804. (See Collegiate History.)

Hon. LABAN WHEATON was appointed Chief-Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, May 18, 1810; but, it is believed, did not hold the office long. (See Collegiate History.)

JUDGES OF PROBATE.

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD was commissioned Judge of Probate, Feb. 16, 1747; and held the office till his death in 1778. (See councillors.)

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD, son of the above, was appointed to this office, June 7, 1784; and held it several years.

JUDGE OF COURT OF SESSIONS.

Hon. LABAN WHEATON was appointed Judge of this Court, May 25, 1819; but, the following year, the court was abolished.

REGISTER OF PROBATE.

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD, Jun., was commissioned register, April 18, 1749; and held the office till 1783.

REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS.

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD was chosen, in 1788, a member of the first Congress of the United States. He

¹ Gravestone.

failed of an election to the second, but was a member of the third and fourth Congresses.

Hon. LABAN WHEATON was representative eight years, — from March 4, 1809, to March 4, 1817.

We here present to our readers the votes for Governor for each year, from the adoption of the State Constitution to 1857. The name first recorded under the year was the Governor for that year, either elected by the people or by the Legislature. Those who failed of a popular election, but were subsequently chosen by the General Court, we have designated by a (*).

	Votes.		Votes.
1780.		1789.	
John Hancock . . .	72	John Hancock . . .	71
James Bowdoin . . .	2	Scattering	4
1781.		1790.	
John Hancock . . .	54	John Hancock . . .	56
1782.		James Bowdoin . . .	8
John Hancock . . .	21	1791.	
1783.		John Hancock . . .	77
John Hancock . . .	41	1792.	
1784.		John Hancock . . .	71
James Bowdoin . . .	33	Samuel Phillips, jun. .	10
John Hancock . . .	3	1793.	
1785.		John Hancock . . .	61
James Bowdoin* . . .	8	1794.	
Thomas Cushing . . .	25	Samuel Adams . . .	52
Nathaniel Gorham . .	1	William Cushing . . .	14
1786.		David Cobb	10
James Bowdoin . . .	7	1795.	
John Hancock . . .	29	Samuel Adams . . .	47
Thomas Cushing . . .	2	1796.	
1787.		Samuel Adams . . .	52
John Hancock . . .	104	Increase Sumner . . .	18
James Bowdoin . . .	8	1797.	
1788.		Increase Sumner . . .	18
John Hancock . . .	52	Moses Gill	55
Elbridge Gerry . . .	39	James Sullivan . . .	31

	Votes.
1798.	
Increase Sumner . . .	58
Moses Gill	19

1799.	
Increase Sumner . . .	33
William Heath	91

1800.	
Caleb Strong	42
Elbridge Gerry	85

1801.	
Caleb Strong	31
Elbridge Gerry	73

1802.	
Caleb Strong	38
Elbridge Gerry	83
Edward H. Robbins . .	1

1803.	
Caleb Strong	81
Elbridge Gerry	63

1804.	
Caleb Strong	64
James Sullivan	93
William Heath	1

1805.	
Caleb Strong	71
James Sullivan	89

1806.	
Caleb Strong	86
James Sullivan	69
John Sullivan	1

1807.	
Caleb Strong	123
James Sullivan	118
Scattering	3

1808.	
James Sullivan	90
Christopher Gore . . .	120

	Votes.
George Walker	1

1809.	
Christopher Gore . . .	108
Levi Lincoln	127
Scattering	3

1810.	
Elbridge Gerry	149
Christopher Gore . . .	107
David Cobb	1

1811.	
Elbridge Gerry	125
Christopher Gore . . .	104
William Grey	1

1812.	
Caleb Strong	139
Elbridge Gerry	124

1813.	
Caleb Strong	146
Joseph B. Varnum . . .	108

1814.	
Caleb Strong	137
Samuel Dexter	123

1815.	
Caleb Strong	141
Samuel Dexter	122
Scattering	2

1816.	
John Brooks	121
Samuel Dexter	112
Scattering	3

1817.	
John Brooks	104
Henry Dearborn	81

1818.	
John Brooks	119
B. W. Crowningshield .	87
Thomas Kittridge . . .	1

1819.		1828.	
	Votes.		Votes.
John Brooks	133	Levi Lincoln	56
B. W. Crowningshield .	103	Marcus Morton	5
William Phillips . . .	1	Emerson Briggs	1
1820.		1829.	
John Brooks	103	Levi Lincoln	31
William Eustis	74	William Baylies	34
1821.		Marcus Morton	27
John Brooks	115	Scattering	3
William Eustis	65	1830.	
1822.		Levi Lincoln	13
William Eustis	63	Marcus Morton	66
John Brooks	90	William Baylies	14
William Phillips	2	Scattering	3
1823.		1831.	
William Eustis	105	Levi Lincoln	77
Harrison G. Otis . . .	96	Marcus Morton	41
1824.		William Baylies	10
William Eustis	111	Scattering	4
Samuel Lothrop	123	1832. ¹	
1825.		Levi Lincoln	61
Levi Lincoln	78	Samuel Lothrop	139
Marcus Morton	1	Marcus Morton	17
1826.		1833.	
Levi Lincoln	52	Levi Lincoln	38
Samuel Hubbard	20	Samuel Lothrop	126
Thomas Winthrop . . .	8	Marcus Morton	10
Joseph Tripp	1	1834.	
1827.		John Davis*	25
Levi Lincoln	61	John Q. Adams	97
William C. Jarvis . . .	14	Marcus Morton	17
William Baylies	12	1835.	
Scattering	7	John Davis	35
		John Bailey	104

¹ In 1831, the Constitution was amended, so that the Governor should be chosen in November, instead of April; and take his seat the first Wednesday of January, instead of the last of May. Hence it will be understood, that, from 1832, the Governor was chosen the November previous to the year under which we have recorded his name.

	Votes.
Marcus Morton . . .	11
Samuel C. Allen . . .	6
1836.	
Edward Everett . . .	40
Marcus Morton . . .	64
Samuel T. Armstrong .	2
1837.	
Edward Everett . . .	32
Marcus Morton . . .	99
1838.	
Edward Everett . . .	68
Marcus Morton . . .	114
1839.	
Edward Everett . . .	65
Marcus Morton . . .	161
1840.	
Marcus Morton . . .	178
Edward Everett . . .	81
Wendell Phillips . . .	1
1841.	
John Davis . . .	122
Marcus Morton . . .	202
1842.	
John Davis . . .	80
Marcus Morton . . .	183
Lucius Boltwood . . .	15
1843.	
Marcus Morton* . . .	197
John Davis . . .	65
Samuel E. Sewall . . .	30
1844.	
George N. Briggs* . . .	64
Marcus Morton . . .	183
Samuel E. Sewall . . .	60
1845.	
George N. Briggs . . .	70
George Bancroft . . .	160
Samuel E. Sewall . . .	64

	Votes.
1846.	
George N. Briggs . . .	60
Isaac Davis . . .	114
Samuel E. Sewall . . .	52
1847.	
George N. Briggs . . .	72
Isaac Davis . . .	94
Samuel E. Sewall . . .	44
Scattering . . .	9
1848.	
George N. Briggs . . .	65
Caleb Cushing . . .	91
Samuel E. Sewall . . .	59
1849.	
George N. Briggs* . . .	86
Stephen C. Phillips . .	155
Caleb Cushing . . .	33
1850.	
George N. Briggs* . . .	58
Stephen C. Phillips . .	114
George S. Boutwell . .	59
1851.	
George S. Boutwell* . .	95
George N. Briggs . . .	74
Stephen C. Phillips . .	74
1852.	
George S. Boutwell* . .	77
John G. Palfrey . . .	112
Robert C. Winthrop . .	109
1853.	
John H. Clifford* . . .	105
Horace Mann . . .	112
Henry W. Bishop . . .	53
1854.	
Emory Washburn* . . .	88
Henry Wilson . . .	117
Henry W. Bishop . . .	58
Bradford L. Wales . . .	4

	Votes.
1855.	
Henry J. Gardner . .	149
Emory Washburn . .	50
Henry Wilson . . .	30
Henry W. Bishop . .	19
Charles Allen . . .	3
1856.	
Henry J. Gardner . .	117
Julius Rockwell . .	71

	Votes.
Erasmus D. Beach . .	49
Samuel H. Walley . .	18
1857.	
Henry J. Gardner . .	238
Erasmus D. Beach . .	51
William L. Garrison .	9
Luther V. Bell . . .	4
Scattering	2

CHAPTER XXI.

TAXES, AND OTHER FINANCIAL HISTORY.

“Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's.” — CHRIST.

FOR some years after the incorporation of the town, it was customary to meet in the autumn; and all who had any charges against the town brought in their bills, and a tax sufficient to pay them was then levied upon the polls and estates. The practice of voting money in the autumn, to meet the current expenses of the town, continued till 1790. Since then, it has been voted at the annual meeting for the choice of town-officers in the spring. For some years, the town paid the representative to the General Court for his services; and hence a rate was made for that purpose. Some years, it is uncertain from the records how much money was raised. We give the sums in round numbers, instead of the fractions of a pound that sometimes occurred; and therefore, in some cases, the rate was a few shillings more or less than we have recorded.

Oct. 31, 1720. — “At a Town-meeting to mack a by-law conserning our town-Rats, [it was] voted that one-half of our Rates should be Raised on the polls, and the other half on our Estats.”

The next day, Anna Leonard and her son George entered a "Protest against being Rated by any other Rule than that which is in the law."

Years.	Town-Charges.	Schools.	Representative.	Years.	Town-Charges.	Schools.
1715	£2		£8	1751	£27	
1716	8			1752	50	
1717	11			1753	30	
1718	2		6½	1754	50	
1719	9		6½	1755	27	
1720	20	£30	14	1756	80	
1721	14	30	15	1757	100	
1722	6			1758	110	
1723	9		14	1759	110	
1724	29	12	16	1760	110	
1725	12	34 ¹	10	1761	110	
1726	24	10	15	1762	120	
1727	31	20		1763	70	
1728	33	40		1764	70	
1729	31	20		1765	40	
1730	57	19		1766	120	
1731	20	25		1767	100	
1732	25	20		1768	130	
1733	16	30 ²		1769	80	
1734	14	30 ²		1770	60	
1735	22	30 ²		1771	70	
1736	20			1772	100	
1737	37	37		1773	80	
1738	64	30		1774	75	
1739	90	20		1775	90	
1740	70	20		1776	120	
1741	60			1777	180	
1742	36			1778	1400	
1743	150 ³			1779	1180	
1744	122 ³			1780	6000	
1745	80 ³	40		1781	500 ⁵	
1746	170 ³			1782	100	
1748	300 ³			1783	300	£60
1749	400 ³			1784	150	60
1750	40 ⁴			1785	250	60

¹ Including £8½ of interest-money from bank.

² Poor and schools.

³ Old tenor.

⁴ Lawful money.

⁵ Silver money.

Years.	Town-Charges.	Schools.	High-ways.	Years.	Town-Charges.	Schools.	High-ways.
1786	£200	£60		1822	\$1000	\$550	\$1000
1787	150	60	£120 ¹	1823	1000	550	1000
1788	150 ²		122	1824	1000	550	1000
1789	180	40	122	1825	1000	550	1000
1790	120	60	122	1826	1100	600	1200
1791	195 ³		120	1827	1100	600	1200
1792	252		120	1828	1100	700	1200
1793	300		120	1829	1100	600	1200
1794	300		120	1830	1100	500	1200
1795	300		100	1831	1100	500	1500
1796	\$1200		\$1000	1832	1200	500	1200
1797	1000		1200	1833	1200	500	1200
1798	800		1000	1834	1300	600	1200
1799	1000		1000	1835	1200	600	1200
1800	1200		1000	1836	1600	700	1400
1801	1200		1000	1837	1600	700	1200
1802	1200		1200	1838	1400	700	1000
1803	1400		1200	1839	1400	700	1000
1804	1000		1000	1840	1200	700	1000
1805	1200		1200	1841	1000	800	1000
1806	1800		1200	1842	1000	800	1000
1807	1300		1500	1843	1000	800	1500
1808	1300		1500	1844	2000	600	1000
1809	1200		1500	1845	1500	800	1200
1810	1400		1500	1846	1500	800	1500
1811	1200		1200	1847	1500	1199	1200
1812	1200		1200	1848	1500	1200	1500
1813	1200		1200	1849	1200	1000	1500
1814	1500		1200	1850	1500	1200	1500
1815	1800		1000	1851	1500	1200	1500
1816	1384	\$416	1000	1852	1500	1200	2000
1817	1400	450	1000	1853	1500	1200	2000
1818	1400	450	1000	1854	1000	1500	2000
1819	1400	450	1000	1855	1000	1500	2000
1820	1000	450	700	1856	1500 ⁴	1500	1500
1821	1000	450	800	1857	2000	1500	1500

¹ This was the first rate for raising a highway-tax that we find on record.

² "To be appropriated for the sole purpose of redeeming the notes of hand that now are against sd. town."

³ From 1791 to 1816, the school-money is included in the amount for town-charges.

⁴ Three hundred and fifty dollars were also appropriated to pay "out-standing bills."

There being a great scarcity of money, both of bills of credit and specie, a year or two previous to 1720, the people found it very difficult to transact ordinary business-matters, and especially to pay their taxes; and therefore, May 13, 1720, it was ordered, —

“That all our Town-Rates, that are to be payed this year by the Inhabitants for the defraying the contengant charges of sd. town for the year 1719 and 1720, shall be payed the one-half in Good shingles, at fourteen shilinds pur thousand; Clabords, at three pounds pur thousand; white-pine bords, at three pounds per thousand, — and delivered at the landing-place at Taunton, near John Staples’s; or in Good Indin Corn, at three and sixpence pur busshill; Rey, at five shilinds pur bushill; wheat, at seven shilinds pur bushill; oats, at two shillinds pur bushill; beaf, at three d. pur pound; pork, at four d. pur pound; butter, at sevenpence pur pound; Good dry chese, at five d. pur pound; beans, at Six Shilinds pur busshil; and that, out of the money part, the treasurer Is derected, and hereby ordered, to pay the Minister the one-half of his sallary, and to pay the Representative In the money part.”

The paying of the rates in produce, &c., did not seem to better the deranged state and scarcity of the currency. “Shingles, Clabords, pine-bords, Rey, Indin Corn, wheat, oats, beaf, pork, butter, and chese,” to say the least, would not be very convenient change for a man to carry in his pocket; and therefore, this state of things becoming almost intolerable, the town, Sept. 19, 1720, —

“Voted that John Briggs, Sen., shall preepare a petition to Request the Grate and General Cort Respecting the want of money; and offer said petition, the next town-meeting day, to the town for their approbation; and the town-Clark to sign it in thare behalf, If the town licks it.”

Whether the town “licked” the petition or not, we do not know; but the Legislature soon after, as will be seen, took some measures to better the condition of the currency by the establishment of the fifty-thousand-pound bank.

Probably the emission of these bills did not at once relieve the embarrassed state of the finances.

Nov. 11, 1723, it was ordered, —

“That the Rate for Mr. Avery’s salary for this year shall be Paid in the same specia as he agreed with sd. town for it; and the Rest of the towne-rate shall be Paid in the Produce of the towne, at the curant market-price.”

FIFTY-THOUSAND-POUND BANK.

The reason for emitting this loan of money is stated, in the preamble of the bill, to be because “the Publick Bills of Credit on this Province (which, for want of Silver) have . . . answered the Charge of His Majesty’s Government, . . . [and] served as a Medium of Exchange . . . in the Trade and Business of the Province, are grown Scarce, in Proportion to the great demand for the same.” These bills were to be distributed by the Province Treasurer “to the several towns within this Province, according to each Town’s respective proportion of the last Province-Tax.” Three or five trustees who were freeholders, and each possessed of a real estate worth at least five hundred pounds, were to be appointed in the several towns to let out this money at interest, on good real estates or personal security. These trustees were to be sworn “to the faithful discharge of their trust,” and were to be paid for their “Pains and Trouble” “what the several towns, in their good Discretion, shall think meet and convenient.” No person was allowed to vote for trustees who had not “an Estate of Freehold worth at least Forty shillings per Annum.” A tax of fifty thousand pounds was ordered to be levied upon the towns of the Province in proportion to the amount of bills they received, as a fund and security for the drawing-in and repayment of said bills to the public treasury; ten thousand pounds of which were to be paid yearly, commencing with the last day of May, 1726, and ending, of course, with the last day of May, 1730.

All the interest, profit, or income, arising to the several towns from these bills of credit, was to be used by the several towns towards "defraying the Town-Charges."

Norton, with the North Purchase, received, as their proportion of this loan, two hundred and forty-seven pounds. The freeholders of Norton and the North Purchase meet, Oct. 16, 1721, and vote that every freeholder of the town of Norton, with the North Purchase, having an estate of freehold of forty pounds per annum, shall have his proportion ". . . of ye Bills of Credit, . . . giving good security to the Trustees, with Lawful Interest, to be Paid yearly in ye Produce of ye town, at ye then current marcet-price;" and the trustees were to take bondsmen or not, as they saw fit.

As soon as the trustees received the money, they were to give eight days' notice to the freeholders; and "if there be aney Percone yt shall neglect or Refuse to come for theyr Part of ye sd. Bills, twenty days after ye sd. 8 days of notice be given," then the trustees were empowered to let out the money "to any of the freeholders," &c.

The trustees were required to render a yearly account to the town and North Purchase of their doings, and were to "be allowed out of the Town treasury for theyr Reasonable Charges in the Premices."

The following persons were then chosen trustees: John Hodges, George Leonard, and Benjamin Williams.

On the 1st of November following, another meeting was held relative to the matter, and the following vote passed:—

"Notwithstanding the act that was passed in a town-meeting, on ye 16th day of October, 1721, for the Letting-out of our Part of the fifty thousand Pounds of Bills of Credit, it is now Enacted and voted, that the trustees that are chosen to Lett out sd. Bill shall Lett out sd. money to the freeholders in sd. towne and North Purchase to no Percon above teen Pounds, nor any Percon under five Pounds, as

far as it 'twill Go; they Giving Good security to ye trustees for ye Payment of sd. money, with the Interest for one year."

SIXTY-THOUSAND-POUND BANK.

In 1728, the General Court passed an Act for another loan of sixty thousand pounds, because "the Publick Bills of Credit, which have for a great length of time happily served this Government, are now become very scarce." This loan was distributed to the towns on a plan similar to that of the fifty-thousand-pound loan of 1721. The qualification of the trustees, and of those who voted for them, was the same as in 1721. The trustees were to let out the money at six per cent interest; four of which was to be paid annually into the public treasury, the other two per cent to go to the several towns "to enable them to pay the cost and charge attending this affair."

A tax on the real and personal property of the towns was the fund for the redemption of the loan; twelve thousand pounds to be paid annually from May 31, 1734.

Norton's part of this loan was two hundred and seventy pounds, ten shillings.

April 19, 1728, the freeholders of Norton properly qualified, in public meeting duly notified for the purpose, chose several persons trustees to receive and let out the town's proportion of the money; who refused to accept the office.

It was then "voted, that the trustees shall Let out sd. Bills to no Person above ten Pounds, nor to no Person less than five Pounds, within one fortnight's time" after the money was received, and due notice given to the town. Then, "if there is not Persons enoff appear in sd. time to take it," the trustees were to "Lett it out in sd. town as they see cause; taking Good security for sd. money, together with the Interest." It was also voted, "that the trustees shall have six Pounds for the whole of their troubell" in taking care of the money.

“March 2nd, 1743-4. — Voted that the selectmen — Simeon Wetherell, William Stone, and Josiah Pratt — shall Recon with the trustees which were chose to Let out the said town's Part of the sixty-thousand-Pounds Bank, or the survivors of them, and to Receive the said town's Part of the Interest; and also to sew them for it, if need be; and also to sew the said surviving trustees for that part of the Princepell which they have neglected to Pay to the Province treasury; so that there is a Rate made on said town for it already. and they are also Impowered to carry on any action or actions in the Law against them, till they Git the said town's Part of the Interest, and ye Prinsepell sume of said Bank, which said town is rated for; and also all the charge sd. towne have already Bin Put to about it.”

In a warrant for a town-meeting, Sept. 24, 1744, one article was as follows: —

“To act and Proceed in that way that they shall then think most Propper consarning the trustees of the sixty-thousand-Pound Bank; either to discharge them, and accuit the towne's Part of the Interest, or to agree otherwise; or to take some other method, so as to Bring that matter to a dispatch. Likewise to Hear what the selectmen have done consarning that matter already.”

The only recorded action at the meeting relative to the bank is this: —

“Voted to Capt. Simeon Witheral and Mr. William Stone, for what they Paid Coll. Church towards his fees for sarving ye Executions for ye Bank-money, £01—13.”

The town-records throw no further light upon the matter; and therefore we must let the curtain fall, and leave it for each reader to decide for himself how the matter was finally settled up. These are the only two banking schemes that the town, as a town, are known to have been connected with.

LAND-BANK.

After the drawing-in of the bills of the sixty-thousand-pound loan in 1738, the currency of the country became again somewhat deranged. Therefore, in the

beginning of the year 1740, with the professed design of providing a remedy for the inconveniences expected to arise from the withdrawing from circulation, in 1741, of all the various emissions of paper currency, without substituting any other medium of trade than gold and silver, a company was formed for the purpose of issuing bills of credit, on land security, to an amount not exceeding a hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

There were eight hundred and sixty-three partners in this scheme, about four hundred of whom belonged in Boston, the rest in various parts of the Province. This scheme was very obnoxious to Gov. Belcher, who vigorously sought to crush it out.

In July, 1740, he issued his proclamation, cautioning the people not to receive or pass the notes of the company, because they would tend "to defraud men of their estates, and disturb the peace and order of the people."

In November of the same year, he issued another proclamation, forbidding all military officers from dealing in this currency, under penalty of dismission from office. In fact, nearly all officers of the government were forbidden to pass these bills. The opposition to this bank entered largely into the election of representatives to the General Court for May, 1741. But a majority of the members elect seem to have been in favor of the bank; for one of the bank-directors (Samuel Watts, Esq.) was chosen Speaker of the House. Thirteen new councillors were chosen, supposed to be favorable to the bank scheme. Gov. Belcher, however, vetoed the election of councillors; and, the next day, sent in a message dissolving the Legislature. He also removed from office those favorable to the bank; and, among others, George Leonard of Norton, of whom I have spoken elsewhere.

The town, however, seem to have been in favor of the bank. Mr. Leonard — who was a member of the Legislature dissolved by Gov. Belcher — was, on the 29th of June following, re-elected representative to the new General Court, which was to meet on the 8th

of July. And a further evidence that the town was favorably disposed towards the matter is to be found in the vote passed Nov. 23, 1741; viz., "voted, that the maneyfactory-bills shall pay ye town's charge for this year."¹

BILLS OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS.

"Prior to 1750, the Massachusetts Legislature had enacted that the Provincial bills should be redeemed this year [1750] with hard money paid them by the parent government for charges of warfare against the French in the Canadas, &c. But the Legislatures of other Provinces had not so wisely determined: their bills were still circulating at great depreciation, as were those of Mass. While the commissioners of Mass. were receiving the bills of their own Province, they were allowed to redeem from its inhabitants bills of N.H., R.I., and Conn. [and these were called 'the bills of the other Govermentts'], provided they would take oath that they had such money before April of 1750, and had not bought them of persons belonging to those Provinces, with silver, since March 30th of the same year."²

It appears from the town-records that the principal town-officers in Massachusetts were, in addition to the oath of office, required to take the oath respecting the bills of other governments. Hence, at the annual meeting for choice of officers, held March 26, 1751, a moderator and town-clerk were chosen, who took the requisite oath relative to the other government bills. Then they proceeded to choose more than twenty persons for selectmen, who all, with but one exception, refused to take this extra oath; but this one was not sworn. Finding it impossible to get a board of selectmen who would take this oath, the meeting adjourned to May 15.

Immediately after the adjournment, an informal meeting of some of the citizens was held; and a committee was appointed "To petition the Great and

¹ For further account of the Land-Bank scheme, see Hobart's Sketch of Abington, p. 154, &c.

² Letter of Rev. J. B. Felt.

General Court, that the Oath respecting the Receiving and passing the [other Government] bills may not be imposed upon the inhabitants of this town, or that they Inforce that Petition that is already Preferred to sd. Court." We do not find any action of the Legislature relative to the extra oath; but they passed an Act, April 8, 1751, enabling the town to complete the choice of their town-officers, "the expiration of the month of March notwithstanding:" and finally, in July, the list of officers was completed of those willing to take the oath. The oath continued to be administered to the principal town-officers till the year 1773.

In consequence of the calling-in of the Province bills in 1750, and the law against receiving and passing the bills of other governments, the people again experienced great difficulties in the payment of their debts, and especially their taxes.

No doubt with a view to remedy the trouble, so far as they could, the town, —

"Jan. 21st, 1750-1, chose a Comtee to consider and report to the sd. town in what species and at what Prises sd. Rates shall be paid.

"The abovesd. Comttee made report, and the sd. towne voted, that, in Paying the above-mentioned rates, they may be paid in good marchentable Rey, at 3s. 4d. a Bushell; Indian Corne, at 2s. 8d. a Bushell; Oats, at 1s. 4d. a Bushell; Wheat, at 4s. 8d. a Bushell; flax, from the swingele, at 18d. a pound; Bar Iron, at 18s. 8d. a hundred; Beans, 4s. 8d. a Bushell; Sheep's wool, at 1s. 2d. a pound; Barley, at 2s. 8d. a Bushell."

"Sept. 2nd, 1751. — Voted, that those persons, that should pay their Rates in the species hereafter mentioned, shall pay them at ye prices hereafter sett: viz., Reye, at 2s. 6d. per Bushell; Corn, at 1s. 9d. per Bushill; Oats, at 0s. 10d. per Bushell; Wheat, at 3s. 0d.; Beens, at 2s. 6d. per bushill; Barley, at 2s. 4d. per Bushell; Iron, at 16s. 0d. per hundred; Flax, at 0s. 6d. per pound; and wool, at 0s. 8d. per pound."

During the latter part of the Revolutionary war, the finances became very much disordered; the bills of

credit became almost valueless ; gold and silver money was very scarce ; and a general bankruptcy seemed almost inevitable. It was probably the most severe pecuniary crisis ever experienced by our fathers. As early as Nov. 10, 1777, the town "voted to Remonstrate and Pertition to the great and general Court of this state, that the Late act, with Regard to calling in the Bills of Credit Issued by said state, be Repealed ;" and a committee was chosen to "Draw a Remonstrance and Pertition." This remonstrance was probably sent, and a communication from the General Court soon after received ; for, Jan. 1, 1778, there was a town-meeting, among other things, "to hear the address from the General Court, setting forth the reasons which induced said Court to pass a late act for calling in the bills of credit Emittted by this Government." It does not appear, however, that any action was taken upon the matter.

A town-meeting was warned to be on the 5th of July, 1779, "To take under consideration the votes and Resolves of the town of Boston, sent to this town (to be communicated) with regard to the depreciation of our currency, and the methods proposed for redressing the present grievances that so much affect us." About this time, a convention had been called to meet at Concord ; we should judge, to consider, among other matters, the state of the finances. Accordingly, at the town-meeting, July 5, it was "voted, that one of the committee of Correspondence should go to the convention to be holden at Concord on the fourteenth day of this Instant."

At an adjourned meeting, July 26, "voted to accept of the Proceedings and Resolves of the convention held at Concord on the fourteenth day of July instant, and do every thing in their power to carry the same into execution." — "Voted, that a committee be chosen to Regulate the Price of articles in this town, agreeable to the articles afixt by the sd. Convention."

At an adjourned meeting, Aug. 16, the report of this committee was "excepted by a Large Majority."

It was then ordered, "that there be Proper coppies of the Report of the Committee of the Price of things in this town rote and set up at Every Publick-house and at Every Griss-Mill in this town." The "committee of correspondence" were empowered "to cary into Execution the resolves of the Convention at Concord;" and Silas Cobb was chosen a committee "to correspond with other towns in the county." At an adjourned meeting, Aug. 30, "voted, that three of the committee that stated the price of things should attend the proposed Convention to be held at Taunton on the eighth of Sep. next."

Aug. 30, 1779, the town "voted to choose one man for the proposed convention at Concord, and that he be chosen by paper-votes."

From an article in the warrant for the above meeting, it seems that this convention was called "to take into consideration the prices of Marchandize and country Produce," and was "to be holden on the first Wednesday of October next." What was done at the convention, we know not. In the warrant for a meeting to be held Sept. 20, 1779, there was an article "to receive the report of the Committee chosen to meet in a County convention at Taunton, in order to regulate the Prices of such things as are commonly Bought and sold in sd. County." What the report was, or whether one was made, the records say not; but what has been recorded serves to show us the expedients to which the people were obliged to resort, in order to meet the demands made *upon* their purses when they had nothing reliable *in* their purses.

CHAPTER XXII.

WATER PRIVILEGES, MANUFACTURES, AND STATISTICS OF
INDUSTRY.

“Ho! all who labor, all who strive;
Ye wield a lofty power:
Do with your might; do with your strength;
Fill every golden hour.
Oh! to your birthright and yourselves,
To your own souls, be true:
A weary, wretched life is theirs
Who have no work to do.”

MISS C. F. ORNE.

IN the year 1695, Thomas and James Leonard, as we have already stated on page 12, &c., commenced the erection of an iron forge on Stony Brook, nearly in front of the old Leonard Mansion House, westerly of Wading River; which, in a few years, passed into the hands of Major George Leonard (son of Thomas); and by him, his son George, and grandson George, the business of smelting the ore, and the manufacture of iron, was carried on at this place till near the close of the last century.

For many years, a great amount of business was done here by the enterprising family whose name is so honorably and permanently associated with the early ironworks of this continent. The late Judge Leonard built a gristmill, nearly on the site of the old forge, in 1805. It continued in operation till since the year 1825. George L. Barnes (a descendant of Major George Leonard), who, by the death of Mrs. Bowen, came into possession of the Leonard homestead, erected in 1855, at great expense, a saw and shingle mill, &c., near the site of the old forge. He occupied the mill about a year; and since then, till January, 1859, it stood idle, most of the machinery having been taken out. It has very recently been bought by Henry S. Freeman, who has set it in motion again.

There was a sawmill on Mulberry-Meadow Brook, a short distance above where Thomas Copeland now resides, as early as 1710, owned by James Leonard, jun., and John (?) Austin; and might have been the first sawmill erected in town. In 1746, and for some years subsequently, it was owned by Samuel Clapp, and afterwards by his son, Jonathan Clapp; but, previous to 1771, it passed into the hands of John Cook and Samuel Godfrey. About 1719, the mill was burned: it was then owned by James Godfrey, and was soon rebuilt by him. Its present owners are Benjamin and Moses Lincoln.

As early as 1714, there was a "cornmill" owned by George Leonard on Wading River, at what is now Barrowsville. It had then probably stood several years, and, no doubt, was the first gristmill erected in town; and, we suppose, for many years it was the only one. On the death of Mr. Leonard in 1716, he devised this privilege to his son Nathaniel, afterwards minister at Plymouth; and it remained in his possession till his death in 1761. There was then a gristmill and sawmill, which were given to his son George. They probably stood on the opposite side of the road, several rods above where the factory now stands. On the 12th of January, 1770, George Leonard deeded to Jonathan and John Amory a hundred and thirty-five acres of land, and "all the houses, mills, and other buildings, thereon erected." He also deeded to them one-half of the pot-ash house and utensils standing on the land belonging to John White. When this pot-ash was built, or how long it remained, we have no information. In a little more than two months (or March 31, 1770), the Amorys sold the mills and land, and half of the potash standing thereon, to William Homes. June 13, 1783, he sold to Thomas Dawes, of Boston; and he (Homes) soon returned to Boston, from which he was probably driven, in 1770, on account of his hostility to the despotic acts of the British government. Dawes mortgaged these mills, &c., in 1788, to Josiah Waters and others, of Boston; who,

Nov. 18, 1790, conveyed the property to Ephraim Raymond, a very energetic business man, who soon after erected an iron-forge, and carried on that business for some years. In 1810, Mr. Raymond and his father-in-law (Josiah Dean, of Raynham) erected the cotton-factory now standing. Mr. Raymond probably owned three-fourths of the establishment. The firm was known as the "Norton Manufacturing Company." March 10, 1821, Raymond bought of the executors of Mr. Dean one-fourth of the factory; and between the 6th of November, 1821, and the 26th of August, 1833, at four different times, he sold portions of it to Samuel Crocker and Charles Richmond, amounting to seven-eighths of the whole establishment. Albert Barrows bought one-fourth of the factory, Oct. 1, 1833; and owned it, with Crocker and Richmond, for several years. March 12, 1837, the "Norton Manufacturing Company," consisting of Crocker, Richmond, and Barrows, was incorporated by the General Court, with the privilege of holding capital to the amount of fifty thousand dollars. After the failure of Crocker and Richmond, the property was sold at auction. Feb. 3, 1844, the "Wheaton Manufacturing Company," consisting of "Albert Barrows, Samuel B. King, and Laban M. Wheaton, their associates and successors," was incorporated by the Legislature for the purpose of making "cotton and woollen goods," and were authorized to hold personal and real estate to the amount of fifty thousand dollars. The company organized under the charter, March 12, 1844. Mr. Barrows died May 7, 1854; but, under the same corporate name, the business of making cotton cloth and batting is still carried on there. In the year 1849, a steam-engine was erected to propel the machinery, when short of water in the summer; and, during the present year (1858), a gristmill has been started in the steam-engine building.

On the 18th of March, 1718, Benjamin Leonard, sen., of Taunton, deeded to John King two hundred acres of land, at a place called "buttomenummonthe," together with a dwelling-house partly finished; a

quarter part of a sawmill; and the forge, "cole-house," and appurtenances, &c. Leonard was to have the right to dig and carry off the iron ore from ten acres of land "near to drinkwater." This forge and sawmill stood on Rumford River, six or eight rods above the bridge, near where Daniel S. Cobb now lives. The forge was afterwards moved nearly half a mile down the river; and finally run down, and stopped work, about a hundred years ago. About 1792, Daniel Smith, Laban Smith, and William Story, built a mill, on the easterly side of the river, for cutting nails, a few rods below the bridge, near which the forge and sawmill were first erected. This nail-mill was burned ten or fifteen years after its erection. Daniel Smith rebuilt it for the same purpose. It has since been used for sawing shingles and for making cotton-batting. Mr. Smith erected a sawmill in 1822, some twenty rods below where the nailmill stood. This sawmill was repaired, and the dam rebuilt, in 1857, by Daniel S. Cobb, Esq.; who by the death of his uncle, Daniel Smith, has recently come into possession of the privilege. In 1817, a clothier's shop was built on the opposite side of the river from the sawmill, by Sampson Patten. It was afterwards occupied by Pliny Puffer and Stillman Smith for the manufacture of shuttles, and subsequently of cotton-batting; and was burned January, 1840.

About 1730, William Makepeace erected a grist and saw mill on Canoe River, near where Eddy Lincoln now lives. These mills were rebuilt, about 1751 or 2, by Peter Makepeace, son of William. Not far from 1770, George Makepeace built an iron-forge just below, and on the opposite side of the road from, where the grist and saw mill now stand. How long the forge was in operation, we know not. Peter Makepeace had a slitting-mill in a part of the forge-building, or else adjoining to it; and it is said to have been the first slitting-mill in the United States. But this is a mistake.¹ This privilege passed into the ownership

¹ See Genealogical Register, vol. xi. p. 258.

of Lysander Makepeace in 1792. On the 21st of January, 1811, he sold land for a bleachery, and water privilege for a factory, to Daniel Patten, Daniel Shepard, Benjamin Blanding, and Thomas W. T. Bicknell; reserving to himself three-eighths of the privilege. The cotton-factory was built, and went into operation, in October of the same year. Mr. Bicknell was the first agent of the company. They made cotton-cloth and yarn about eighteen years. Then the factory passed into the hands of Daniel Patten and Mason Stone; and, in a few years, was owned by Mr. Stone alone. On the 3d of October, 1851, Mr. Stone sold to Eddy Lincoln and Hiram J. Hunt; and Mr. Hunt, in a short time, sold his right to Eddy Lincoln. Since then, the building has been used for a shingle-mill, box-factory, a planing-machine, and a wheelwright's shop; and is still owned by Mr. Lincoln. Aug. 28, 1824, Deacon Makepeace sold the sawmill and gristmill to the Norton Cotton Mills Company; which, at that time, consisted of himself, Daniel Shepard, Lemuel Perry, Jacob Shepard, Simeon Blanding, Benjamin Blanding, Daniel Patten, and Ichabod Perry. With the factory, they passed into the hands of Mason Stone; and March 26, 1845, together with a shingle-mill that had been built a few years previous, they were purchased by Eddy Lincoln, who is the present owner.

It is supposed that a sawmill was built by Major Joseph Hodges, on Crooked Meadow Cedar-Swamp Brook, near where Jarvis Hodges now lives, previous to 1745. This mill seems to have been rebuilt or repaired, in 1753 or 4, by three of his sons and their cousin Ephraim, as appears by a paper which reads, "norton, March the 8, ye 1754, then reckned and Balanced all accounts About Bulding and reparing our mill till this day, as witness our Hands,—

"Joseph Hodges, Timothy Hodges, Ephraim Hodges, Isaac Hodges." In his will, dated May 1, 1756, Capt. Joseph Hodges speaks of his "third part of a saw-mill;" "it being in partnership with my brother Isaac

Hodges, and Timothy Hodges." No one can now remember when a mill stood there, and the privilege has fallen into disuse.

From a deed given by Ebenezer Burt, July 12, 1744, to William Stone, of forty and a half acres of land, — which was a part of his then "dwelling-farm," — it appears that an iron-forge and a sawmill were at that time standing on Rumford River, near the residence of the late Deacon Daniel Lane. Burt seems to have owned the forge, and he and William Basset the sawmill. The forge and sawmill are believed to have stood nearly opposite to the house where Deacon Lane lived, near the middle of the present factory-pond, where the remains of the old dam are still to be seen. On the 12th of February, 1776, the forge was still standing, as it appears from a deed given by Ebenezer, Joseph, Naomi, and Sarah Burt to Nathaniel Stone (son of William), of all the rights and privileges in the stream reserved by the deed of 1744. It is presumed that Stone, father or son, had previously become owner of the sawmill, and thus had complete control of this water privilege; which, for many years, was in the possession of the Stone family. It is believed that the forge and sawmill were both rebuilt about 1770. How long the forge stood is uncertain. Some time before 1800, a gristmill was erected, which stood a few feet easterly of where the factory now stands. More than fifty years ago, Deacon Lane, or rather the Lane Brothers, came into possession of this water privilege; and, in 1811 or 12, they rebuilt the sawmill on the site of the old one. In 1828, a company was formed, and the cotton-factory, or "Centre Mills," were built by Daniel Patten, Lemuel Perry, John and David Arnold, Simeon Derry, Deacon Daniel Lane and sons; and the building of the factory destroyed the sawmill privilege. In the year 1846, the factory passed into the hands of Laban M. Wheaton, Esq., who is still the owner; and the mills have been running but little of the time since. The present gristmill was built in 1846 (?).

Previous to 1745, Jonathan Hodges erected a mill on Goose Brook, a few rods below the bridge, near where George H. Arnold now lives; and carried on the business of "Fulling, Dyeing, and Dressing Cloth." This was the first mill for that business erected in Norton. Soon after it was erected, in consequence of some trouble with Judge Leonard, — whose land was flowed by the fulling-mill pond, — Mr. Hodges removed his mill about thirty-five rods further down the stream, where he fullled and dressed cloth until about 1784; when his son, Jonathan Hodges, jun., assumed the business, and carried it on alone (with the exception of one or two years when he had a partner) till 1814, — the time of his death. In the fall of 1846, David and George H. Arnold erected the building now standing by the bridge, and, for some years, made cotton-batting. It is now used for a shingle-mill, &c.

More than a hundred years ago, a sawmill was built by Deacon John Andrews (?) on Burt's Brook, about eighty rods above the site of the present mill. This old mill was fast going to ruin eighty years ago. The present sawmill near the furnace, on Burt's Brook, was built in the fall of 1800 by Luther Lincoln. A carding-mill was started there in 1814. The present building below the road, used as a shingle-mill, &c., was erected in 1817, and, for some years, used for the carding of wool, &c. A machine for sawing shingles was put into it in 1826. The furnace for casting iron, &c., was built by Annes A. Lincoln in the fall of 1825. It is now occupied by Annes A. Lincoln, jun., and Company, for the same purpose.

About a hundred years ago, a sawmill was built on Dora's Brook, some fifty rods above where Charles H. Briggs's wheelwright-shop now stands, by Samuel Hunt. It was in ruins more than fifty years since. Hiram J. Hunt built a shop on the same spot about 1843, where he had a turning-lathe, and sawed wagon-felloes. It was occupied only six or seven years.

About the year 1807, Terry Crane erected a sawmill

where Mr. Briggs's shop now stands. It was taken down in 1841 or 42. Mr. Briggs's shop was built in 1849. Some twelve years previously, he moved the shop — wherein his father, Daniel Briggs, made ploughs, which stood nearly in front of Don P. Makepeace's house — to the little brook westerly of where Warren Adams lives, and carried on the wheelwright business there.

Previous to 1761, a grist and saw mill were erected on Wading River, near where Allen and Augustus Lane now live, by Rev. Nathaniel Leonard, and his brother, Col. George Leonard. At his death, Rev. Nathaniel gave his half part of these "new mills," as he called them, to his son Thomas, together with all his land there, on the west side of the river, up to the road by Goose Bridge. Thomas Leonard died in a few years, and his part of this property passed into the hands of the late Judge George Leonard. Col. George Leonard, at his death in 1778, devised his part of the estate to his daughter, Mrs. Anna Chandler; who, Dec. 25, 1792, sold her half of the mills, and two hundred and thirty-two acres of land, &c., to Josiah Dean, of Raynham, and Ephraim Raymond, of Norton. These mills finally run down, and stood idle several years. Nov. 18, 1820, the Lane Brothers (Ephraim, William, Daniel, Allen, Calvin, and George) bought of Raymond and the executors of Mr. Dean their share of the mills, and rebuilt them; giving Mrs. Bowen — who had, by the recent death of her father (Judge Leonard), come into the possession of the other half — one-fourth the income till the mills were paid for. In May, 1835, the entire privilege and appurtenances were sold to William A. and Samuel L. Crocker, who wanted the water to carry by canal to their copperworks establishments, about three-fourths of a mile below. About 1845, the mill-buildings were taken down; and the water still goes to the copperworks by canal.

Previous to the Revolution, Benjamin Braman built a sawmill on Goose Brook, back of where Allen D.

Lane now lives; but, being absent in the war, it run down. William Braman and Seneca Sanford built a sawmill near the same spot about 1814. It was used till the death of Mr. Braman in 1839, and then went to decay. Another building was erected by Augustus and Allen D. Lane in 1845. It is now used by them for sawing shingles and box-boards.

On the 30th of August, 1783, Nathan and Edward Babbit of one party, and Annes Newcomb of the other, entered into an agreement to build a dam for a gristmill and fulling-mill, — the Babbits to build each one-fourth of the dam and one-half of the gristmill, and Newcomb to build the other half of the dam and the whole of the fulling-mill;¹ and the buildings were soon after erected on Canoe River, on opposite sides of the stream, a short distance from Easton line, between where Nathaniel Newcomb's factory now stands and the sawmill. On the 18th of November, 1794, Nathan Babbit being dead, his son Edward deeded to Levi Babbit one-half of the gristmill; the other half being then owned by Asa Newcomb.¹ Previous to Jan. 5, 1795, the fulling-mill had passed into the hands of Asa Newcomb, who was a brother of Annes, and a sawmill had been built: for, on that day, he (Asa) sold one-half of the fulling-mill and one-half of the dam to Thomas Danforth, reserving the water not needed for the gristmill and fulling-mill for his (Newcomb's) sawmill;² which shows that the sawmill was standing at that time. In February, 1811, Danforth sold to Jonathan Smith, Simeon Presbery, jun., Daniel Presbery, Stimson Austin, and Alanson Cobb, reserving to himself three-eighths of a water privilege; and they built thereon a factory for making cotton-yarn. This factory was owned by different individuals up to 1822; when Nathaniel Newcomb bought the whole of it, and made yarn for a time, then thread, and finally wadding and batting. In December, 1831, the factory was burned; and Mr.

¹ Records of Deeds, vol. lxxv. p. 6.

² Ibid. vol. lxxiii. p. 347.

Newcomb rebuilt on the same spot, in April, 1832, the mill he now owns. In 1812, James Beaumont, of Canton, received a patent on a certain kind of wadding. Mr. Newcomb bought of him the right, and has manufactured that wadding from 1832 to the present time. The gristmill went into disuse about 1814; the fulling-mill, about 1820. The sawmill still stands, and is owned by Eddy Lincoln and George R. Leonard.

Not far from 1790, William Carpenter built a mill for cutting nails, on the westerly side of Rumford River, near the house now owned by Mrs. Eli Wood. By a freshet in 1806 (?), the dam was carried away, and the mill partially removed from its foundation; so that it was never after used as a cutting-mill, and was subsequently removed from the spot. The building now occupied by Ruel Robinson as a wheelwright-shop was built by Thomas Braman, 3d, in 1833; he having bought, April 18 of that year, the privilege. He made doors, window-frames, and sashes. The building was afterwards owned by George Clapp, and used for the same purpose. After the death of Mr. Clapp, Earl and Royal P. Hodges bought the privilege, July 2, 1845, and continued the same business. They sold the sash and also the saw mill, Dec. 28, 1846, with the land belonging thereto, to Jacob Shepard (guardian of John L. Hall); and, in a few days, Mr. Shepard sold the same to Loren Willis, the present owner of both buildings. He made iron axletrees in the sashmill two or three years. Mr. Ruel Robinson hired the building in the autumn of 1850, and commenced the manufacture of carriages, and still carries on quite an extensive business in that line. In 1809 or 10, Zebulon White built the sawmill now standing above the road, and owned by Loren Willis. After Mr. White's death, the mill was bought, in 1843, by Eli and Elkanah Wood, jun. They sold to Earl and Royal P. Hodges, May 3, 1845. Many years ago, previous to 1800, there was a potash-building on the opposite side of the road to the sawmill; but by whom owned, or when built, we are not informed.

In the year 1796 (?), Benjamin Horton built a slitting-mill on Wading River, at what is now called the Copperworks Village, on the spot where the Cupola Smelting Furnace stands, adjoining the bridge. This building was burned the fore part of the year 1824. Mr. Horton had also a mill for cutting nails, on the opposite side of the river, which was burned some years previous to the slitting-mill. Crocker and Richmond erected the Cupola Furnace Building, in 1825, for a copper-rolling mill. The same year, they erected the building back of the furnace for a copper-refining furnace. It is now used as a yellow-metal furnace. In these two buildings the company carried on the copper business till 1835. In that year, the Crocker Brothers dug the canal from the mill-pond by Allen and Augustus Lane's, and erected what is called the Lower Mill, on the northerly side of the river, which is operated by the water from the canal. In 1838, they added the upper or zinc mill; all of which, for some years past, have been owned and carried on by the Crocker Brothers and Company, of Taunton. During the year 1857, they put on an addition to the Cupola Smelting Furnace, for the purpose of condensing the oxide of zinc escaping from the furnace, which previously passed off through the chimney into the atmosphere in the form of vapor or smoke. It has proved to be a valuable improvement, not only for getting rid of the nuisance, but also in a pecuniary point of view; for, on an average, more than fifty dollars' worth of the powder is saved daily, when the furnace is in operation, and is used in painting, though not quite so clear and white as lead. Mr. William A. West, about the year 1837, in one of these buildings, commenced making cents for the United-States Government; or rather, he prepared them for coining, and then sent them to the mint for that purpose. He continued to manufacture them till the issue, two or three years since, of the new and smaller cent; and, on an average, he made about sixty tons per year.

It is believed that Isaac Francis built a cutting-mill

about sixty years ago on Rumford River, back of the house now owned by William A. King, between the Centre Mills and the road leading from the village to the railroad depot. It was afterwards owned by Ichabod Clapp, but has been down many years.

Araunah Smith had a cutting-mill, forty-five or fifty years ago, back of where his son Deacon S. Smith now lives, on the brook that passes between Allen B. Tucker's and Ansel Keith's.

George Hodges built a fulling-mill on Wading River, a short distance below Barrowsville, about 1810. He had trouble with the owners of the factory, for flowing back upon their water-wheel, and was obliged to take down his dam. He moved his mill to the little stream near his house (where Samuel H. Lane now lives), and carried on business till he died, in 1828.

David and Josiah Woodward built a sawmill on Rumford River, just above its junction with Wading River, about 1815; and it was used some ten or fifteen years. The privilege has not since been occupied.

Isaac T. Braman erected a building on Wading River, in 1853, nearly half a mile below Mansfield Line. It is used for a gristmill, circular saws, and a turning-lathe.

It will be seen, from what has been written, that the first branch of business established here, aside from farming, was the manufacture of iron from the ore. For many years it furnished employment to a large number of men and boys; the making of nails being a very prominent feature of the business. At first, these were all hammered separately by hand; but this was a slow and expensive process, and therefore led to the invention of the "slitting" and "cutting mills," as they were called. The slitting-mills were used to slit the iron, that had been rolled down to a proper thickness, into strips, of the width needed for the length of the nails; and the cutting-mills cut these strips into nails, which, for a long time, were headed by hand. Some forty or fifty years ago, the business of cutting and heading nails was carried on here quite extensively: but,

since nails have been headed by machinery, the business has passed away from Norton; and two or three solitary blacksmiths' shops, for shoeing horses, oxen, &c., are all that remain of the numerous nail-shops, cutting-mills, &c., of former generations.

In the early history of our country, the mothers and daughters carded and spun by hand; and also wove into cloth the wool, flax, and hemp raised in those days. When woven, the woollen cloth was carried to the fulling-mill to be dressed and colored, and thus prepared for use. Many families, however, did their own coloring, especially of the yarn and the linen cloth. It was not till within the present century that machines for carding wool were introduced into town. They produced a great revolution in the labor of females.

The braiding of straw, and the manufacture of bonnets and hats therefrom, have, in some measure, furnished a substitute for the hand-cards. Betsey Makepeace, sister of David Makepeace, was the first who braided straw in Norton. She had learned to do so while on a visit to Wrentham. This was more than fifty years ago. At first, the straw was braided whole; but, shortly, a gauge, made of needles, was devised, by which the straw was split by hand. For some time, individuals raised their own straw, and cut it up at the proper season, and prepared it for use. At length, a division of labor took place: a part braided, and others sewed the braid into bonnets and hats. From the commencement of the straw-business here about 1802, to the present day, it has furnished quite a lucrative employment to a large number of females. Ansel Keith and Jonathan Smith were among the first to commence the business somewhat after the fashion of the present day. They bought the straw, and put it out to be braided and sewed. This was about 1808. George Gilbert commenced the manufacture of bonnets, &c., about the same time. Soon after, Thomas Danforth, 2d, entered into the business, and carried it on quite extensively. Hiram H. Wetherell, either alone, or

with his brother Horace B., carried on the business from 1833 to 1844. Sept. 3, 1850, the Norton Straw Manufacturing Company, consisting of the Wheaton Manufacturing Company, L. M. Wheaton, Zeno Kelly, L. D. Anthony, and A. Barrows, was organized, with a capital of seven thousand dollars, and made bonnets, hats, &c. Jan. 14, 1854, the company was dissolved, and the Norton Straw Company was formed, consisting of L. M. Wheaton, Zeno Kelly, and T. T. Rockwood, with a capital of fourteen thousand dollars. Nov. 12, 1855, another change took place. T. T. Rockwood, A. Dunham, and D. S. Hardon, assumed the business, under the name of the "Norton Manufacturing Company." Oct. 6, 1856, Dunham and Hardon retired from the firm, and C. M. Dean became a member; and, in the spring of 1857, the company stopped business, and no one has taken their place. Many of the females in town, however, sew for firms in neighboring towns.

By the erection of cotton-mills for making cloth, &c., in 1810 and 1811, a new impetus was given to the enterprise and industry of the town. When these mills went into operation, the cotton-bales were sent round to different families in town, and the cotton was *whipped* by men and women. This was done to prepare it for use, instead of *picking* it by a machine, as is now done. No weaving was done in the mill near Eddy Lincoln's for some years after its erection. The yarn made was put out, in this and other towns, to be woven by hand-loom.

The first tannery in town is supposed to have been between the schoolhouse in District No. 3 and Burt's Brook; and was perhaps built soon after the incorporation of the town, by John Andrews, who settled thereabouts. But the first tannery of which we have any authentic account was built about 1740, by Deacon Benjamin Copeland, between the house of Thomas Copeland and Mulberry-Meadow Brook. It continued in the Copeland family till it went to decay, about 1845. About 1758, David Arnold, who learned his trade of Deacon Copeland, set up a tannery on Burt's

Brook, near where his son, Lemuel Arnold, now lives, and did a large amount of business for many years. Before the Revolution, a tannery was built near Rumford River, at the place where Mason Freeman lives, by a *Mr. Basset*. It was afterwards owned by George Walker, and fell into disuse some thirty years since.

The shoe-business has never been carried on to any great extent in town. Of late years, quite a number of persons have taken boots and shoes to bottom for companies that reside elsewhere. In 1857, a fund of five thousand dollars was subscribed for the purpose of organizing a company to manufacture boots and shoes; but the financial pressure of that year crushed it in embryo.

The manufacture of baskets has been carried on for some years past by Hiram H. Wetherell, George W. Story, Deacon Jason F. Alden, Deacon Stillman Smith, Josephus Skinner, and others.

Ploughs were made by Daniel Briggs, and also Washburn Braman, for several years; but the introduction of cast-iron ploughs put an end to the wooden ones.

A building for the making of molasses from Indian-corn stalks was built, during the Revolutionary war, by Nathaniel Wood and Noah Wiswall, on the southernly side of the road, about half way from where the Wiswall House stood to where Warren Adams now lives. It was in a great measure a failure; though, for a few years, a small amount of molasses was made. Simeon Presbery, during the war of 1812, erected a building for the manufacture of molasses from corn-stalks. It stood a short distance easterly of Nathaniel Newcomb's house, in the lot, near a large oak-tree.

Mr. Samuel R. Lincoln has, for some years, manufactured gravestones at the extreme easterly part of the town.

Theodore Carver, for some years, carried on the manufacture of soap in the northerly part of the town.

Within the present year (1858), Austin Messinger has commenced the manufacture of a very superior kind of friction-matches.

TABLE OF STATISTICS.

NUMBER.	1735.	1771.	1784.	1791.	1801.	1811.	1821.	1831.	1840.	1850.
Valuation . . .		£1120		£2820	\$12084	\$14268	\$17000	\$379568	\$578670	\$714021
Polls	225	313	406	339	319	361	376	349	422	459
Houses	153	182	254	171	185	204	214	233	263	314
Barns				144	154	161	180	202	226	244
Horses	164	146	293	127	174	152	133	147	171	188
Oxen	239	204	290	228	263	198	196	221	129	171
Cows	293	477	758	569 ¹	518 ¹	545 ¹	546 ¹	475	364	438
Sheep	1398 ²	1631 ²	2922					680	272	90
Swine	181	315	139	313	330	303	333	283	296	278
Bbls. of Cider .		653	1556	626	1063		577			
Tons of Hay .		1219	1844		1297		1138	1174	1262	1415
Bush. of Corn .					1870		7465	6124	5451	6153
" " Oats .					499		1366	772	2152	529
" " Rye .					1208		1686	1063	1217	672
" " Wheat					25			7	22	
Oz. of Plate .				60	40	30	204	150	30	200
Mills	5	10	11	7						
Gristmills . . .					4	5	4	4	2	2
Sawmills					4	7	8	7	5	
Fulling-Mills . .				1	2	2	2	1		
Iron-Forges . .	3	2	3	2	2	2				

¹ Including steers.² Including goats.

In the following statistics, we have abbreviated a few words that are frequently repeated; viz., val. denotes value; cap., capital invested; emp., persons employed; m. emp., males employed; f. emp., females employed; m., manufacture; m'd, manufactured.

STATISTICS FOR 1837.

Cotton-mills, 4; cotton-spindles, 1,993; cotton consumed, 385,019 lbs.; cotton-goods m'd, 290,376 yards; val. of same, \$53,167.82; m. emp., 53; f. emp., 35; cap., \$57,228.

Sheep, 425; wool, 1,108 lbs.; val. of wool, \$664.80; val. of sheep, \$850.

Boots m'd, 5,357 pairs; shoes, 2,470 pairs; val. of both, \$15,862.50; m. emp., 13.

Tanneries, 2; hides tanned, 375; val. of leather, &c., \$850; m. emp., 2; cap., \$1,500.

Air and cupola furnace, 1; iron-castings made, 375 tons; val. of same, \$37,500; m. emp., 25; cap., \$18,000.

Plough-manufactories, 2; ploughs made, 35; val. of same, \$220; m. emp., 2.

Straw bonnets m'd by dealer in them, 2,800; val. of same, \$8,163; straw bonnets m'd for dealers in other towns, 14,834; straw braid, 43,900 yards.

Copper cupola furnaces, 8; sheet-copper and copper-bolts m'd, 500 tons; val. of same, \$280,000; m. emp., 33; cap., \$226,000.

Shuttles m'd, 300 doz.; val. of same, \$1,500.

Val. of baskets m'd, \$500.

STATISTICS FOR 1845.

Cotton-mills, 4; spindles, 2,320; cotton consumed, 200,000 lbs.; cotton-cloth m'd, 598,272 y'ds; val., \$35,896; cotton-yarn m'd, and not made into cloth, 12,000 lbs.; val., \$2,000; cotton-batting, 16,000 lbs.; val., \$1,240; val. of pelisse-wadding m'd, \$1,300; cap., \$39,600; m. emp., 35; f. emp., 36.

Furnaces for m. of hollow-ware and castings other than pig-iron, 1; hollow-ware and castings m'd, 450 tons; val., \$35,000; cap., \$25,000; emp., 35.

Copper-manufactories, 1; copper m'd, 750 tons; val., \$316,750; cap., \$226,000; emp., 60.

Establishments for m. of soap and tallow-candles, 1; soap m'd, 300 lbs.; val., \$1,200; cap., \$1,000; emp., 2.

Tanneries, 1; hides tanned, 50; val. of leather tanned and curried, \$50; cap., \$150; emp., 1.

Value of building-stone quarried and prepared, \$300; emp., 1.

Lumber prepared, 383,000 feet; val., \$1,167; emp., 20.

Fire-wood prepared, 1,660 cords; val., \$4,996; emp., 17.

Sheep, 276; val., \$421; wool produced, 565 lbs.; val., \$169.

Asses, 1; val., \$50; horses, 169; val., \$7,712; neat cattle, 654; val., \$10,875; swine, 293; val., \$1,465.

Indian-corn, or maize, raised, 6,308 bush.; val., \$3,154; rye, 724 bush.; val., \$543; oats, 600 bush.; val., \$180; potatoes, 18,052 bush.; val., \$4,528; other esculent vegetables, 800 bush.; val., \$300; hay, 1,160 tons; val., \$11,600; flax, 10 lbs.; val., \$1.

Fruit raised, 2,319 bush.; val., \$417.

Butter, 7,535 lbs; val., \$1,227; cheese, 8,702 lbs.; val., \$676; honey, 68 lbs.; val., \$11; beeswax, 4 lbs.; val., \$1.

Val. of gravestones, \$700; emp., 2.

STATISTICS FOR 1855.

Cotton-mills, 3; spindles, 3,656; cotton consumed, 175,000 lbs.; cloth m'd, 376,320 y'ds, from No. 35 to 40; val. of cloth, \$42,336; yarn m'd, 45,720 lbs.; batting m'd, 25,836 lbs.; val. of batting, \$2,325.24; pelisse-wadding m'd, 3,000 doz.; val. of wadding, \$225; cap., \$85,000; m. emp., 53; f. emp., 33.

Furnaces for m. of hollow-ware and castings other than pig iron, 1; hollow-ware and other castings m'd, 500 tons; val. of hollow-ware and castings, \$50,000; cap., \$25,000; emp., 30.

Copper-manufactories, 1; cap., \$60,000; emp., 60.

Establishments for m. of coaches, chaises, wagons, &c., 2; val. of coaches, &c., m'd, \$3,615; cap., \$2,000; emp., 5.

Establishments for m. of straw bonnets and hats, 1; straw bonnets m'd, 35,000; straw hats m'd, 36,000; m. emp., 19; f. emp., 250.

Charcoal m'd, 20,000 bush.; val. of same, \$2,000.

Lumber prepared for market, 1,205,000 ft.; val. of lumber, \$11,715.

Fire-wood prepared for market, 2,588 cords; val. of fire-wood, \$8,210.

Sheep, 92; val. of sheep, \$210; wool produced, 287 lbs.

Horses, 211; val. of horses, \$16,156; oxen, over three years old, 90; steers, under three years old, 47; val. of oxen and steers, \$10,785; milch-cows, 420; heifers, 82; val. of cows and heifers, \$12,161.

Butter, 12,358 lbs.; val. of butter, \$2,471.60; cheese, 8,538 lbs.; val. of cheese, \$1,024.76.

Indian-corn, 275 acres; Indian-corn, per acre, 28½ bush.; val., \$7,637.

Wheat, 2¼ acres; wheat, per acre, 31¼ bush.; val., \$170; rye, 92 acres; rye, per acre, 10 bush.; val., \$1,380; barley, 9 acres; barley, per acre, 18 bush.; val., \$165; oats, 97 acres; oats, per acre, 14 bush.; val., \$819.60.

Potatoes, 187 acres; potatoes, per acre, 61 bush.; val., \$6,844.20; turnips, cultivated as a field-crop, 8 acres; turnips, per acre, 81 bush.; val., \$120.

English mowing, 1,602 acres; English hay, 871 tons; val., \$17,420; wet meadow or swale hay, 521 tons; val., \$5,210.

Apple-trees, cultivated for their fruit, 3,428; val., \$1,389; pear-trees, cultivated for their fruit, 150; val., \$93; cranberries, 22 acres; val., \$1,440.

Establishments for m. of boxes, 1; cap., \$2,000; val. of boxes m'd, \$6,000; emp., 3.

Round timber sent to market, 500 tons; val., \$3,000.

Swine, 367; val., \$3,070.

CHAPTER XXIII.

POPULATION AND CENSUS OF 1855.

“Go now through all the tribes, and number ye the people.” — OLD BIBLE.

In this chapter, we shall give the population of Norton at various times; and the State Census of the inhabitants on the 1st of June, 1855, taken by the assessors, which has been copied for us by a friend. We have taken the liberty to correct a few very obvious mistakes. Probably some of the surnames will be found incorrectly spelled, especially among the foreign population; and, doubtless, the same will be true of a few of the

Christian names. It is almost impossible to take the census of any town, without more or less errors being made.

POPULATION.

Year.	Number.	Year.	Number.	Year.	Number.
1763 . . .	1912 ¹	1800 . . .	1481	1830 . . .	1484
1776 . . .	1329	1810 . . .	1598	1840 . . .	1554
1790 . . .	1428	1820 . . .	1600	1850 . . .	1966

CENSUS OF 1855.

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Adams, Joseph S. . .	35.	Mass.	Amelia K. . .	24.	Mass.
Olive A. . .	35.	"	David D. . .	21.	"
Adams, Warren . .	71.	"	Marianna B. .	12.	"
Eunice . . .	71.	"	Charles F. Wilbur .	6.	"
Henry B. . .	20.	"	Bernard Coyle .	15.	Ire.
Mary S. Wetherell	21.	"	Arnold, George H. .	32.	Mass.
Allen, Ephraim . .	53.	"	Maria M. . .	27.	"
Sarah J. . .	42.	"	Arnold, David A. .	31.	"
Sally . . .	79.	"	Ruth A. . .	22.	"
Allen, James . . .	53.	"	Ruth B. Lewis .	51.	R.I.
Abigail . . .	51.	"	Austin, Otis C. . .	44.	Mass.
George E. . .	25.	"	Catharine . .	39.	N.Y.
Velina W. . .	19.	"	Ann M. . .	17.	Mass.
Mary E. . .	13.	"	Sanford B. . .	16.	"
Eliza L. . .	11.	"	Adelaide . .	14.	"
Martha C. . .	8.	"	Josephine E. .	12.	"
Harriet S. . .	6.	"	Granville D. .	10.	"
Alden, Jason F. . .	57.	"	Albert A. . .	8.	"
Keziah E. . .	55.	"	Lizzie I. . .	1.	"
Hannah W. .	23.	"	Austin, Solomon . .	64.	"
Alden, William H. .	27.	"	Zilpah . . .	63.	"
Angelia M. . .	24.	"	Peleg E. . .	26.	"
Arnold, Lemuel . .	79.	"	Abigail L. Field	25.	"
Mary A. . .	21.	"	Babbitt, John . .	69.	"
John Wallace .	45.	Ire.	Rhoda . . .	66.	"
Polly Bolton .	62.	Mass.	James L. . .	37.	"
Arnold, Asa . . .	58.	"	Abigail L. Smith	12.	R.I.
Hannah P. .	53.	"	Barker, George . .	56.	"
Henry W. Horton	16.	"	Mabrey . . .	52.	"
Helen E. Olney .	14.	"	Alfred . . .	21.	Mass.
Jemima Arnold .	85.	"	Susan M. . .	18.	"
Arnold, John . . .	59.	"	Bassett, Mary . .	62.	"
Esther D. . .	47.	"	Frederic T. Lane	23.	"
Mary E. Nichols	28.	"	Bailey, Sarah M. .	44.	N.H.
Arnold, David. . .	53.	"	Sarah S. . .	13.	Mass.
Roby . . .	54.	"	Mary J. . .	11.	"
Hannah D. .	27.	"	Caleb J. . .	8.	"

¹ This included the inhabitants of the North Precinct, now Mansfield.

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Ballou, William . .	42.	Mass.	Gardner . .	16.	Mass.
Elizabeth A. . .	40.	"	Blandin, Sumner . .	47.	"
George W. . .	18.	"	Louisa . .	42.	"
Charles H. . .	16.	"	Frances L. . .	20.	"
Edward F. . .	14.	"	Allen S. . .	19.	"
Frederic D. . .	12.	"	Henry W. . .	14.	"
Joseph E. . .	8.	"	Mary E. . .	11.	"
Isabella J. . .	3.	"	Herbert H. . .	6.	"
Emily J. . .	10 mo.	"	Blake, Hannah H. . .	30.	"
Barrows, Carlos . .	47.	"	Mary E. . .	6.	"
Cynthia W. . .	44.	"	Franklin D. . .	3.	"
Nancy E. . .	17.	"	James C. . .	30.	Me.
Henrietta E. . .	12.	"	Mary Lathrop . .	61.	Mass.
Stella M. . .	9.	"	Boland, John . .	33.	Ire.
Barrows, Harriet . .	50.	"	Joanna . .	30.	"
Henry M. . .	25.	"	John . .	14.	"
Edwin . .	21.	"	Patrick . .	10.	"
Harriet L. . .	18.	"	James . .	8.	"
Emma F. . .	16.	"	Mary . .	7.	"
Julia R. . .	13.	"	Dan . .	6.	"
Blanchard, Sylvia . .	67.	"	Michael . .	1.	Mass.
James . .	24.	"	Catharine . .	2 mo.	"
Bates, Horatio . .	36.	"	Bolan, Michael . .	41.	Ire.
Sarah H. . .	34.	"	Ellen . .	13.	"
Sarah J. . .	15.	"	Bolton, William S. .	25.	Mass.
Savilion H. . .	13.	"	Flora J. . .	23.	"
Bellows, Alfred . .	37.	"	Eugene W. . .	3.	"
Charlotte . .	33.	"	Clara J. . .	1.	"
Otis W. . .	8.	"	Brady, Patrick . .	40.	Ire.
Josephine . .	2.	"	Bridget . .	36.	"
Blandin, Benjamin .	74.	"	John . .	14.	"
Nancy . .	69.	"	Thomas . .	11.	"
Nancy W. . .	36.	"	Catharine . .	9.	"
Emily . .	30.	"	Eugene . .	5.	"
William B. . .	28.	"	Charles . .	1.	Mass.
William Gould . .	36.	"	Bragg, Lucinda . .	76.	"
Blandin, Simeon . .	66.	"	H. Granville . .	22.	"
Rebecca . .	60.	"	Louisa Townsend .	38.	"
Lucius D. . .	27.	"	Augusta Townsend	8.	"
Benjamin F. Taylor	25.	"	Braman, Isaac T. . .	25.	"
Louis A. Horton . .	14.	"	Mary J. . .	27.	"
Lucy A. Dean . .	23.	"	Sarah . .	73.	"
Blandin, Jesse . .	68.	"	Benjamin Morey .	30.	"
Susannah . .	69.	"	Braman, Washburn .	71.	"
Blandin, Jesse H. . .	41.	"	Polly . .	57.	"
Eunice M. . .	31.	"	Chloe . .	31.	"
Abbott H. . .	11.	"	Benjamin . .	23.	"
Mary E. . .	4.	"	Fanny . .	21.	"
Blandin, Isaac S. . .	57.	"	Braman, Lydia . .	71.	"
Eliza . .	51.	"	Druzilla Shepardson	67.	"
George O. . .	18.	"	Briggs, Emerson . .	70.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Charles Barnes . .	17.	R.I.	Bridget . .	35.	Ire.
Caroline Pond . .	35.	"	Eugene . .	9.	Mass.
Mary Woodbury . .	35.	Mass.	Thomas J. . .	7.	"
Catharine Smith . .	19.	Ire.	Clarence . .	5.	"
Margaret Lee . .	25.	"	James . .	2.	"
Sarah Tenny . .	23.	"	Ann H. . .	4 mo.	"
Honisie McGreath .	19.	"	Patrick Coyle . .	67.	Ire.
Mary Coyle . .	15.	"	Cosgrove, Daniel . .	40.	"
Ellen Barry . .	17.	"	Bridget . .	35.	"
Caroline C. Metcalf	60.	Mass.	Hugh . .	12.	"
Cobb, Daniel S. . .	51.	"	Margaret . .	9.	Mass.
Harriet P. . .	44.	"	Philip . .	7.	"
Silas H. . .	18.	"	Susan . .	5.	"
Derrick W. . .	13.	"	James . .	3.	"
Dulcibella K. . .	11.	"	Edward . .	1.	"
Margaret Calaghan	22.	Ire.	Cosgrove, Patrick . .	28.	Ire.
Daniel Smith . .	86.	Mass.	Catharine . .	26.	"
Cobb, Gilford M. . .	28.	"	Coyle, James . .	21.	Ire.
S. Maria . .	23.	"	Rosa . .	22.	"
Pliny Wetherell . .	23.	"	Crane, John . .	56.	Mass.
Collins, Michael . .	25.	Ire.	Sally . .	54.	"
Margaret . .	53.	"	Crane, John H. . .	29.	"
Catharine . .	23.	"	Sarah E. . .	28.	"
Margaret . .	18.	"	Anna . .	3 mo.	"
Ann . .	16.	"	Crane, George B. . .	44.	"
Michael Caveler . .	2.	"	Martha . .	39.	"
Conaty, James . .	46.	"	George T. . .	3.	"
Ellen . .	46.	"	Samuel Drake . .	29.	"
Mary . .	19.	"	Crane, Daniel . .	39.	"
Catharine . .	17.	"	Wealthy A. . .	39.	"
Patrick . .	15.	"	Mary A. . .	10.	"
Ellen . .	13.	"	Daniel F. . .	3.	"
Bridget . .	11.	"	Crane, J. Calvin . .	33.	"
Ann . .	9.	"	Eliza . .	33.	"
Conaty, James, 2d . .	42.	"	Henry C. . .	9.	"
Lydia . .	37.	"	Charles N. . .	3.	"
Conaty, Charles . .	34.	"	Elmira Pratt . .	49.	"
Rosena . .	34.	"	Crane, George C. . .	27.	"
Charles . .	5.	"	Harriet R. . .	21.	"
Edward . .	3.	Mass.	Abbott C. . .	2.	"
Mary . .	7 mo.	"	Clara E. . .	6 mo.	"
Copeland, Thomas . .	66.	"	Clarissa Fuller . .	17.	"
Eliza . .	57.	"	Crossman, Zephaniah S.	44.	"
Mary . .	25.	"	Crossman, Harrison .	38.	"
Lucy A. Quinley . .	14.	"	Elizabeth A. . .	29.	"
John F. Dixon . .	12.	Scot.	Oren H. . .	11.	"
Copeland, Thomas H..	32.	Mass.	Frank E. . .	7.	"
Lydia A. . .	21.	"	Cordelia E. . .	4.	"
Copeland, Joseph . .	25.	"	Otis B. . .	2.	"
Louisa . .	24.	Me.	Dane, Mary . .	51.	Ire.
Cosgrove, James . .	42.	Ire.	Michael . .	22.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Mary	19.	Ire.	Catharine	36.	Ire.
Bridget	17.	"	Rosy Riley	16.	"
Isabella	15.	"	Ann Riley	7.	"
John	13.	"	Bridget Riley	6.	"
William	11.	"	Donohue, Thomas	38.	"
James	9.	"	Mary	29.	"
Dean, Bethiah	66.	Mass.	James	6.	Mass.
Dolly	56.	"	Thomas	3.	"
Dean, Bradford	55.	"	Charles	1.	"
Eliza	48.	"	Donohue, Francis	38.	Ire.
Lloyd H. . . .	19.	"	Catharine	35.	"
Otis B. . . .	14.	"	Catharine	9.	Mass.
Eustice H. . . .	12.	"	Ann E. . . .	7.	"
Sarah E. Burt	18.	"	James	4.	"
Dean, Otis	42.	"	Mary	2.	"
Elighy S. . . .	39.	"	Donnelly, Patrick	30.	Ire.
Sarah M. . . .	15.	"	Mary	28.	"
Otis B. . . .	13.	"	John	3.	Mass.
Dean, Simeon A. . . .	45.	"	Michael	6 mo.	"
Eliza B. . . .	39.	"	Thomas Marley	35.	Ire.
Ellen M. . . .	15.	"	Barney Rouch	33.	"
Adelia A. . . .	11.	"	Draper, Joseph	46.	Mass.
Hiram A. . . .	9.	"	Lucilda B. . . .	46.	"
Anna J. . . .	3.	"	Joseph O. . . .	21.	"
Mary T. . . .	2.	"	Samuel A. . . .	18.	"
Davis, William H. . . .	37.	"	Mary E. Kirkpatrick	16.	"
Mary D. . . .	32.	"	Drake, Charles A. . . .	33.	"
Mary J. . . .	12.	"	Lydia	40.	"
William H. . . .	9.	"	Charles E. . . .	11.	"
Devoll, Pardon B. . . .	42.	"	Sarah L. . . .	4.	"
Esther G. . . .	37.	"	Dyer, Polly	64.	"
Edward S. . . .	19.	"	Mary A. . . .	36.	"
Mary C. . . .	15.	"	Eliza A. Lincoln	13.	"
Catharine	11.	"	Droun, Sally	68.	"
Julia A. . . .	6.	"	Nancy M. . . .	32.	"
Catharine Galligan	18.	Ire.	Sarah F. . . .	25.	"
Ann Cunningham	38.	"	Eddy, Mary	69.	"
John S. Clapp	36.	Mass.	Eddy, Hodges	31.	"
Dexter, Christopher	29.	"	Almeda	23.	"
Sarah W. . . .	26.	"	John	1.	"
Walter	3.	"	Eddy, John	58.	"
Sarah	9 mo.	"	Charlotte	59.	"
Derry, Betsey B. . . .	61.	"	Eddy, Elijah	70.	"
Joanna C. Taber	56.	"	Elliot, John S. . . .	43.	Eng.
Derry, Clarissa	59.	"	Esther W. . . .	43.	Me.
Eliza J. . . .	22.	"	Mary E. . . .	13.	Mass.
Dorgan, Abbie	52.	Ire.	John W. . . .	12.	"
James	21.	"	William T. . . .	10.	"
Timothy	18.	"	Joseph S. . . .	8.	"
Nancy McNames	22.	"	Charles W. . . .	3.	"
Donohue, James	37.	"	Samuel S. . . .	2.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Elms, Lydia	65.	Me.	Harriet E. . . .	11.	Mass.
Anna	30.	Pa.	Edward M. . . .	8.	"
Fanny	23.	"	Eva L. . . .	2.	"
Ellen Coyle	29.	Ire.	Finn, Michael	40.	Ire.
Bridget Smith	19.	"	Sarah	31.	"
Faden, Nathaniel	55.	Mass.	Austin	7.	Mass.
Susan	51.	"	Mary A. . . .	4.	"
Emiline	10.	"	Sarah	2.	"
Foster, Perez	58.	R.I.	Fitzgerald, David	45.	Ire.
Hannah	49.	Mass.	Margaret	34.	"
George	16.	"	Joseph	14.	"
William H. . . .	14.	"	John	8.	"
Ellen J. . . .	5.	"	Mary	7.	"
Samuel Balcom	81.	"	Anna	4.	Mass.
Foster, Alexander	30.	"	Ellen	2.	"
Georgianna	28.	"	Frarey, Owen	40.	Ire.
Abner H. . . .	7.	"	Rose	35.	"
George	5.	"	Bridget	15.	"
Ellen Godfrey	15.	"	Patrick	13.	"
Fobes, William R. . . .	38.	"	Ann	11.	"
Angeline	33.	"	Barney	9.	"
Elmina A. . . .	10.	"	Rose	7.	"
Marion J. . . .	7.	"	Catharine	5.	Mass.
Francis, Ephraim	50.	"	Mary	3.	"
Mary	16.	Vt.	Margaret	11 mo.	"
Lucian	14.	"	Freeman, Sanforth	71.	"
Lyman R. . . .	9.	"	Nancy	69.	"
Field, David	81.	Mass.	Carlos D. . . .	14.	"
Celia	81.	"	Rachel Thayer	64.	"
Rathburn	40.	"	Freeman, Abigail	83.	"
Matilda	33.	"	Williams	55.	"
Chester R. . . .	12.	"	Freeman, Schuyler	44.	"
Barnum A. . . .	6.	"	Sally M. . . .	41.	"
Field, David, jun. . . .	47.	"	Hiram S. . . .	17.	"
Nancy A. . . .	45.	"	Charles H. . . .	8.	"
Lucretia O. . . .	17.	"	Freeman, Mason	43.	"
Celia A. . . .	7.	"	Hannah S. . . .	42.	"
Field, Emma	47.	"	George M. . . .	21.	"
Abigail B. . . .	49.	"	Seth B. . . .	19.	"
Charlotte G. Stone	22.	"	Ellen E. . . .	5.	"
Field, Earl W. . . .	27.	"	Freeman, Nathaniel	42.	"
Ann J. . . .	25.	"	Sarah J. . . .	34.	"
Ellen J. . . .	1.	"	Abbie J. . . .	14.	"
Field, Rachel	27.	"	Lucinda S. . . .	9.	"
Field, Darius	30.	"	Galligan, Philip	46.	Ire.
Betsy	31.	"	Mary	39.	"
Field, Dennis	56.	"	Mary	12.	Mass.
Sally	55.	"	Rosa	10.	"
Fisher, Marcus M. . . .	47.	"	Agnes	8.	"
Hannah N. . . .	42.	"	Barney	6.	"
Mary	20.	"	Margaret	2.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Galligan, Patrick . . .	30.	Ire.	H. Elizabeth . . .	18.	Mass.
Catharine . . .	28.	"	Lebe A. . . .	17.	"
Henry . . .	3.	Mass.	Martha A. . . .	15.	"
James . . .	2.	"	Emily J. . . .	13.	"
Galligan, Edward . . .	40.	Ire.	Jones W. . . .	11.	"
Mary . . .	33.	"	Goff, Silas R. . . .	42.	"
Henry . . .	16.	Mass.	Roxanna	38.	"
Mary . . .	15.	"	Abby J. . . .	13.	"
Anna . . .	11.	"	Mary E. . . .	7.	"
Edward . . .	10.	"	Baylies R. . . .	3.	"
Ellen . . .	8.	"	Lucinda Horton . . .	20.	"
James . . .	5.	"	Abbie A. Horton . . .	11.	"
Galligan, Charles . . .	40.	Ire.	Gillroy, Hugh	35.	Ire.
Barney . . .	5.	Mass.	Margaret	28.	"
Charles . . .	3.	"	Thomas	2.	Mass.
Ann . . .	27.	Ire.	Mary E. . . .	6 mo.	"
Galligan, Daniel . . .	42.	"	James Gaffney . . .	27.	Ire.
Catharine . . .	36.	"	Grady, Dennis . . .	27.	"
Barney . . .	15.	Mass.	Grace M. . . .	29.	"
James . . .	13.	"	Dennis Galligan . . .	8.	"
Bridget . . .	9.	"	Sarah Galligan . . .	6.	"
John . . .	6.	"	William Galligan . . .	4.	"
Gaffney, Owen . . .	30.	Ire.	Catharine Galligan . . .	1.	"
Elizabeth . . .	23.	"	Patrick Magro . . .	26.	"
James F. . . .	2.	Mass.	John Magro	19.	"
Thomas . . .	3.	"	Catharine M. Magro . . .	21.	"
Gaffney, Edwin . . .	36.	"	Timothy Crowan . . .	26.	"
Mary . . .	24.	"	Grimshaw, Thomas . . .	36.	Eng.
Mary A. . . .	2 mo.	"	Jane	35.	"
Gilmore, Everett G. . .	35.	"	Edward	16.	"
Julia A. . . .	34.	R.I.	Alfred	5.	Mass.
Avis A. . . .	11.	"	James	1.	"
Eveline	9.	"	James Lyle	37.	Scot.
Julia E. . . .	6.	"	Agnes Lyle	35.	"
Elbridge H. . . .	4.	"	Guild, Nancy E. . . .	37.	Mass.
Susan E. Stoddard . . .	31.	"	Ellen S. . . .	10.	"
Esmerelda Stoddard . . .	3.	"	Abbie A. . . .	7.	"
Gooch, Thomas . . .	30.	Mass.	Catharine Darey . . .	40.	Ire.
Elizabeth W. . . .	35.	"	Hall, Benjamin S. . . .	52.	Mass.
Polly King	73.	"	Caroline J. . . .	49.	"
Charles Briggs	7.	"	Hall, Richard H. . . .	45.	"
Goodwin, Polly . . .	80.	"	Mary A. . . .	42.	"
Abby	55.	"	R. Henry	24.	"
Hannah L. . . .	40.	"	Horatio H. . . .	22.	"
Godfrey, David . . .	60.	"	Mary J. . . .	19.	"
Betsy	58.	"	Eliza A. . . .	16.	"
Laura F. . . .	33.	"	Harriet A. . . .	10.	"
Rosilla B. . . .	15.	"	George E. . . .	7.	"
Sarah	85.	"	Velina A. . . .	9 mo.	"
Godfrey, Jones . . .	46.	"	Hall, Eben	49.	Me.
Hannah	41.	"	Susan		"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Isaac M. . . .	21.	Me.	W. George 8 mo. Mass.		
Eben W. . . .	10.	"	Hill, Marbee	70.	"
Christiana A. . . .	6.	"	Martha	75.	"
Susan S. Nason	28.	"	Allen L. . . .	42.	"
Harriet W. Nason	21.	"	Hill, Nahum W. . . .	36.	"
Elizabeth A. Nason	19.	"	Jemima	36.	"
Martha T. Nason	17.	"	Sanford W. . . .	7.	"
Mary A. Nason	15.	"	Ella E. . . .	4.	"
William P. Nason	11.	"	Hicks, Gilbert	56.	"
Harding, Achsah C. . . .	46.	Mass.	Malanca	53.	"
Watie A. . . .	20.	"	Charles F. Carpen-		
Achsah C. . . .	16.	"	ter	21.	"
Andrew A. . . .	5.	"	High, Timothy	35.	Ire.
Hardon, Isaac, jun. . . .	65.	"	Bridget A. . . .	36.	"
Eunice	60.	"	Mary	14.	"
Eunice	38.	"	Anna	12.	"
John D. . . .	22.	"	Catharine	10.	"
Hazleton, George M. . . .	23.	"	John	8.	"
Susan A. . . .	24.	"	Timothy	6.	"
Silence Randall	59.	"	James	1.	Mass.
Harvey, John	35.	"	Holmes, Asa P. . . .	46.	"
Cornelia A. . . .	39.	"	Eunice	48.	"
Cornelia E. . . .	7.	"	Alonzo P. . . .	18.	"
Ellen F. . . .	5.	"	Melissa S. . . .	16.	"
Adeline H. . . .	3.	"	Horton, Abigail	80.	"
Harris, John	33.	Eng.	Horton, Allen M. . . .	26.	"
Margaret	35.	"	Olive K. . . .	25.	"
Alfred Rainford	18.	"	Allen M. . . .	8 mo.	"
Alice Rainford	12.	"	Sarah W. Miller	61.	Conn.
Hagerty, Charles	34.	Pa.	Hodges, Hannah	77.	Mass.
Mary A. . . .	29.	Mass.	Hodges, Leonard	54.	"
Mary A. . . .	7.	"	Chloe	50.	"
Harlow, Reuben	36.	"	Fanny J. . . .	24.	"
Betsy	37.	"	Henry G. . . .	22.	"
Lavinia	13.	"	Ann E. . . .	20.	"
Reuben A. . . .	10.	"	Caroline B. . . .	14.	"
William F. . . .	7.	"	Charlotte A. . . .	12.	"
William T. Britton	21.	"	Hodges, Earl. . . .	44.	"
Sarah Williams	84.	"	Harriet	47.	"
Benj. Mahusen	79.	"	Emma T. . . .	11.	"
Anna Mahusen	78.	"	Emma Lane	50.	"
James Godfrey	66.	"	Hodges, Royal P. . . .	37.	"
Lettuce Puffer	77.	"	Martha M. . . .	38.	"
Nancy Watson	64.	"	Julia B. . . .	7.	"
Edmund Lathrop	49.	"	Ann Williams	24.	"
Hazlehurst, George W. . . .	32.	Eng.	Hodges, Hiram	49.	"
Almeda	27.	N.Y.	Deborah	50.	"
Elizabeth G. . . .	9.	Mass.	John	23.	"
Alfred P. . . .	6.	"	Lucy	19.	"
Chistina A. . . .	4.	R.I.	Frank	15.	"
Minerva A. . . .	2.	Mass.	Sarah	9.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Hodges, Williams . . .	69.	Mass.	Eunice M.	7.	Mass.
Avis P.	58.	"	Hunt, Borden	59.	R.I.
Charles W.	31.	"	Harriet	42.	Mass.
Joseph F.	27.	"	Hunt, Henry	40.	"
Clara	19.	"	Maria	40.	"
Emma R.	17.	"	Henry L.	11.	"
Alfred B.	15.	"	Cornelia Dean . . .	29.	"
Hodges, Jarvis	66.	"	Lewis B. Dean . . .	28.	"
Rhoda	66.	"	Isherwood, Ralph . .	29.	Eng.
Lucinda	73.	"	Alice	28.	"
Maria L. West	20.	"	Mary A.	8.	"
Hodges, Samuel	35.	"	Alfred	2.	Mass.
Eliza J.	29.	"	Harriet	10 mo.	"
Ellen D. Skinner . . .	33.	"	Johnson, James . . .	38.	Ire.
Josephus E. Skinner .	3.	"	Mary	40.	"
Hodges, Newton S. . . .	52.	"	Mary A.	11.	"
Luranah W.	49.	"	Johnson, Charles H. .	37.	N.C.
Sarah	17.	"	Eliza A.	30.	Mass.
David L.	13.	"	Emma J.	9 mo.	"
Hodges, Solomon S. . .	45.	"	Jones, Elnathan . . .	68.	"
Nancy T.	29.	Ca.	Polly	46.	"
Sally M.	8.	Mass.	Harriet A.	12.	"
Hunt, Fanny	70.	"	Jones, William D. . .	20.	"
F. Maria	46.	"	Betsy	23.	"
Hunt, Hiram J.	51.	"	Rosco W.	3 mo.	"
Betsy	47.	"	Jones, William	55.	"
Mary E.	14.	"	Prudence	56.	"
Hunt, Calvin M.	50.	"	Keffe, Edward	26.	Ire.
Lavina	48.	"	Elizabeth	19.	"
Sarah A.	17.	"	Margaret	2.	Mass.
George C.	16.	"	Kelly, Zeno	44.	"
Laura J.	12.	"	Julia A.	34.	"
Hunt, Adolphus D. . . .	47.	"	Blanchard B.	9.	"
Emily J.	43.	"	Zeno H.	7.	"
Emily H.	19.	"	Abbot E.	7 mo.	"
Frank D.	6.	"	Margaret Fane		Eng.
Hunt, John	61.	"	Polly Braman	60.	Mass.
Lucy A.	60.	"	Keith, Ansel	83.	"
Sarah	19.	"	Betsy	71.	"
Hunt, Elbridge G. . . .	57.	"	Nathaniel Andrews .	54.	"
Betsy	57.	"	Keith, Amos	59.	"
George E.	29.	"	Abigail	58.	"
Catharine E.	20.	"	Elbridge D.	31.	"
Hunt, Peddy	70.	"	Cephas	28.	"
Harriet J.	45.	"	Martin L.	20.	"
Hunt, Moses	40.	"	Keith, Williams	65.	"
Nancy	46.	"	Louisa F.	18.	"
Pliny P.	21.	"	Amelia I.	16.	"
Nancy A.	19.	"	Theodore W.	11.	"
Amanda F.	13.	"	Otis L.	8.	"
Albert M.	10.	"	Hannah	70.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Phebe . . .	69.	Mass.	Lucy E. . . .	5.	Mass.
Kimball (?), Rispath . .	64.	R.I.	Abbie R. . . .	3.	"
Alfred Clark . . .	40.	"	Elizabeth . . .	6 mo.	"
William Vallett . . .	25.	"	Abbie N. Pidge . .	22.	"
Leander Leroy . . .	19.	"	Lane, Samuel H. . .	42.	"
Ann Mecannah . . .	39.	Ire.	Rebecca P. . . .	37.	"
King, Rhoda	72.	Mass.	Lane, Augustus . . .	36.	"
Frances E. . . .	33.	"	Mary A. . . .	30.	"
William A. . . .	30.	"	George A. . . .	5.	"
Knapp, Nancy	76.	"	Charles A. . . .	4.	"
Mary F. . . .	50.	"	Robert E. . . .	2.	"
Knapp, Sumner	51.	"	Mary H. . . .	4 mo.	"
Phebe	50.	"	Edgar A. Freeman .	13.	"
Eleanor R. . . .	16.	"	James H. Leonard .	25.	"
Eliza J. . . .	14.	"	Mary Smith	19.	Ire.
Charles P. . . .	11.	"	Lane, David C. . . .	51.	Mass.
Gardner	8.	"	Abiah	55.	"
Knowles, William . . .	51.	"	Alice	24.	"
Elmira	51.	"	Ellen W. . . .	22.	"
George A. . . .	8.	"	William H. . . .	16.	"
Lane, Daniel	84.	"	Lane, Don F. . . .	46.	"
Albert	47.	"	Harriet	42.	"
Elmira	41.	"	Andrew	18.	"
Henry A. . . .	20.	"	Cordelia	16.	"
Marcus O. . . .	9.	"	John T. Williams .	20.	"
Herbert	6.	"	Lane, Mary H. . . .	40.	"
Julietta	3.	"	Lane, Charles D. . .	30.	"
Benjamin C. . . .	42.	"	Fanny H. . . .	27.	"
Lane, Calvin	73.	"	Emily D. . . .	7.	"
Margaret	57.	N.H.	Ellen F. . . .	3.	"
Emily	25.	Mass.	Crawford Lane . .	18.	"
Lane, George	69.	"	Lane, Oliver H. . .	26.	"
Chloe A. . . .	68.	"	Polly E. . . .	24.	"
Silas A. Stone	13.	"	Charles E. . . .	3.	"
Lane, William	61.	"	Eli W. Field . . .	30.	"
Betsy	60.	"	Leonard, Cromwell .	66.	"
Nehemiah A. Dean . .	31.	"	Harriet M. . . .	44.	N.H.
Anjenett R. Wilde . .	6.	"	James Dew	13.	N.B.
Lane, Gardner	42.	"	Elizabeth Hoy . . .	18.	La.
Amelia	39.	"	Leonard, Luen C. . .	35.	Mass.
Mary A. . . .	11.	"	Eunice H. . . .	35.	"
Polly Carver	80.	"	Jacob A. . . .	9.	"
Mary L. Conant . . .	58.	"	Florence C. . . .	5.	"
Lane, Allen	75.	"	Leonard, Hathaway .	53.	"
Elizabeth	70.	"	Mary B. . . .	53.	"
Abigail	30.	"	Alden H. . . .	26.	"
Jerusha H. Freeman .	39.	"	Marion B. . . .	17.	"
Lane, Allen D. . . .	44.	"	Charles P. . . .	14.	"
Lucy M. . . .	34.	R.I.	Leonard, Otis R. . .	24.	"
William A. . . .	13.	Mass.	Mary A. E. . . .	23.	"
Edwin A. . . .	10.	"	Peleg O. . . .	3.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
			Angeline .	8 mo.	Mass.
			Eliza J. Dean .	14.	"
Leonard,			Gilford .	41.	"
			Cassandra .	40.	"
			Gilford H. .	22.	"
			Laura A. .	14.	"
			Charles .	12.	"
			Emeline .	10.	"
			Wealthy C. .	5.	"
			Densey E. .	3.	"
Leonard,			Gilbert B. .	29.	"
			Elizabeth .	24.	"
			Wealthy E. .	9.	"
			Ellen V. .	8.	"
			Walter B. .	5.	"
			Lewis D. .	3.	"
			George F. .	2.	"
			Anna J. .	2 mo.	"
Leonard,			Ezekiel .	38.	"
			Sally R. .	37.	"
			Ezekiel S. .	17.	"
			Lewis E. .	13.	"
			Irving L. .	9.	"
			Edwin F. .	7.	"
			Philo F. .	3.	"
Leonard,			George R. .	45.	"
			Patience E. .	38.	"
			Elizabeth E. .	15.	"
			George H. .	12.	"
			Everett R. .	9.	"
			Stephen L. .	4.	"
			Mary Walsh .	25.	Ire.
Leonard,			Rebecca .	69.	Mass.
			Dennis Moran .	21.	Ire.
Leonard,			George E. .	22.	Mass.
			Jane .	18.	"
Leonard,			James .	55.	"
			Wealthy .	54.	"
			Alexander D. .	16.	"
			James H. .	11.	"
			Caroline Irish .	24.	"
			William D. Wash-		
			burn .	20.	"
Leedham,			John .	53.	Eng.
			Alice .	52.	"
			Joseph .	28.	"
			Thomas .	21.	"
			James .	15.	"
			Samuel .	13.	"
Lee, Alvin D. .				40.	Mass.
			Filena .	41.	"
			Rhoda A. .	13.	Mass.
			Alvin F. .	11.	"
			Betsy Eddy .	49.	"
			Leddy, Barney .	45.	Ire.
			Julia .	50.	"
			Leddy, Peter .	30.	"
			Margaret .	26.	"
			Julia .	3.	"
			Catharine .	7 mo.	Mass.
			Lothrop, Solomon .	64.	"
			Fanny .	64.	"
			Andrew J. .	31.	"
			Nathan C. .	16.	"
			Lothrop, Melvin O. .	36.	"
			Mary A. .	30.	"
			Everett M. .	3.	"
			Fanny T. .	5 mo.	"
			Margaret Butler .	24.	Ire.
			Lincoln, Annes A. .	59.	Mass.
			Nancy .	53.	"
			Mary A. .	25.	"
			Annes A., jr. .	23.	"
			Luther .	21.	"
			Daniel B. .	20.	"
			Anna .	17.	"
			David A. .	14.	"
			Edwin H. Arnold .	34.	"
			Mary Arnold .	49.	"
			Margaret Lynch .	17.	Ire.
			Lincoln, Seneca .	54.	Mass.
			Elizabeth .	50.	"
			Elizabeth .	25.	"
			Ruth .	24.	"
			Seneca L. .	22.	"
			Lydia A. .	20.	"
			Mary B. .	18.	"
			Phebe A. .	15.	"
			Rebecca R. .	13.	"
			Charity .	10.	"
			Rachel Lincoln .	65.	"
			Annis A. Slade .	13.	"
			Lincoln, Laban .	64.	"
			Susannah .	61.	"
			Hannah D. .	29.	"
			Mary J. .	20.	"
			Lincoln, Calvin .	67.	"
			Nancy P. .	56.	"
			Moses O. .	23.	"
			Rhoda Wilbur .	47.	"
			Lincoln, Silas W. .	40.	"
			Susan A. B. .	29.	Me.

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
John H. . . .	14.	Mass.	Lincoln, Samuel R. . .	55.	Mass.
Mary S. . . .	8.	"	Sally	49.	"
Jeremiah McDonald .	22.	"	James G. . . .	24.	"
Thomas Hill . . .	8.	"	Eunice A. . . .	25.	"
Catharine Leonard .	18.	Ire.	Nancy	60.	"
Sarah E. Loring . .	20.	Me.	Lewis E. . . .	12.	"
Ellen M. Loring . .	17.	"	Lincoln, Harrison T. .	27.	"
Lincoln, Sumner W. .	40.	Mass.	Elmira	25.	"
Mary	40.	"	Mary A. . . .	6.	"
Lloyd S. . . .	16.	"	Lincoln, Benjamin . .	55.	"
Mary E. . . .	13.	"	Nancy	52.	"
Harriet M. . . .	7.	"	Joseph	18.	"
Sarah H. . . .	1.	"	Susan Sharky . . .	15.	"
John Hardey . . .	28.	Eng.	Lincoln, John . . .	52.	"
Barney Field . . .	62.	Mass.	Lydia	32.	"
Lincoln, Calvin C. .	32.	"	John B. . . .	11.	"
Catharine M. . . .	27.	"	Charles A. . . .	10.	"
Emory C. . . .	3.	"	Lydia A. . . .	8.	"
Lincoln, Eddy . . .	54.	"	Frances R. . . .	5.	"
Lydia	49.	"	Elnora	10 mo.	"
Daniel	18.	"	Lincoln, Orin F. . .	22.	"
Moses Lincoln . .	18.	"	Laura	18.	"
Mary Magrovren . .	25.	Ire.	Lucy A. . . .	1.	"
Timothy O'Brien .	25.	"	Makepeace, Lysander .	84.	"
James Todd . . .	22.	"	Eunice	83.	"
Samuel Fisher . . .	76.	Mass.	Makepeace, Lysand. O.	37.	"
Lincoln, Aaron, jun.	48.	"	Esther E. . . .	36.	"
Rhoda	47.	"	Anne E. . . .	16.	"
George F. . . .	18.	"	Sarah A. . . .	12.	"
Henry W. . . .	15.	"	Stella A. . . .	9.	"
William O. . . .	13.	"	Frank B. . . .	7.	"
Rhoda E. . . .	10.	"	Lucia A. . . .	5.	"
Hannah M. F. . .	9.	"	Eveline L. . . .	3.	"
Samuel S. . . .	6.	"	Idella S. . . .	5 mo.	"
Charles H. . . .	4.	"	Honorah Calahan . .	16.	Ire.
John C. . . .	2.	"	Makepeace, Don P. . .	50.	Mass.
Lincoln, Elijah . .	64.	"	Elizabeth	36.	"
Patience	64.	"	Lucilda D. . . .	19.	"
Bradford Willis . .	67.	"	Laura F. . . .	10.	"
Lincoln, Elijah D. .	42.	"	Abby	9.	"
Phebe	42.	"	George	4.	"
Phebe C. . . .	18.	"	Charles H. . . .	1.	"
Eliza	11.	"	David	87.	"
Elvira	9.	"	Makepeace, Jason T. L.	33.	"
Jesse D. . . .	6.	"	Mehitable		
Henry A. . . .	4.	"	W. . . .	27.	"
Lincoln, Simeon, jun.	24.	"	Paulinus J. . . .	6.	"
Adaline M. . . .	21.	"	William T. . . .	1.	"
Clarence	2.	"	Makepeace, Deborah .	68.	"
Simeon	63.	"	Lurana Tisdale . . .	48.	"
Lincoln, James . . .	56.	"	Makepeace, Alanson .	47.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
			John . . .	9.	Mass.
Jane I. . .	40.	Mass.	Ellen . . .	7.	"
Mercy J. . .	18.	"	Robert . . .	6.	"
Sarah E. . .	17.	"	McMahan, Thomas . .	39.	Ire.
Martha M. . .	15.	"	Margaret . . .	38.	"
Charles O. . .	5.	"	Patrick . . .	17.	"
Josephine A. . .	2.	"	James . . .	12.	"
Makepeace, David W. .	43.	"	Bridget . . .	9.	Mass.
Abigail A. . .	34.	"	Thomas . . .	6.	"
Abby A. . .	12.	"	Margaret A. . .	4.	"
David A. . .	7.	"	Catharine . . .	2.	"
Elmar W. . .	2.	"	Charles . . .	7 mo.	"
Mathewson, John . . .	32.	"	McNamara, Michael . .	50.	Ire.
Eunice . . .	27.	"	Mary . . .	45.	"
Arabella . . .	9.	"	Catharine . . .	13.	Mass.
Sarah L. . .	5.	"	Jane . . .	11.	"
John H. . .	2.	"	Fanny . . .	9.	"
Munroe, John L. . . .	70.	"	Patrick . . .	7.	"
Betsy . . .	68.	"	William . . .	6.	"
Murry, Catharine . . .	50.	Ire.	Laurana Hacus . . .	13.	Ire.
Mary . . .	19.	"	McNamara, Dennis . .	30.	"
Patrick . . .	17.	"	Margaret . . .	21.	"
Ann . . .	15.	"	Cornelius . . .	3.	Mass.
Catharine . . .	12.	"	Nora . . .	1.	"
James . . .	10.	"	Messinger, James O. . .	45.	"
McCaffery, Thomas . .	34.	"	Phebe M. . .	39.	"
Ann . . .	34.	"	J. Alfred . . .	17.	"
Mary . . .	12.	Mass.	Abbie E. . .	11.	"
Rosena . . .	11.	"	Frances Wayland . . .	22.	N.F.
Alice . . .	8.	"	Messinger, Austin . . .	37.	Mass.
Frederic . . .	5.	"	Salina A. F. . .	32.	"
Julia . . .	2.	"	Mary E. . .	9.	"
McClarence, Archibald .	38.	Eng.	Rhoda . . .	63.	"
Sarah . . .	37.	"	Macomber, Zaccheus .	41.	"
Isaac . . .	17.	"	Elmira . . .	39.	"
Maria . . .	15.	"	James O. . .	16.	"
James H. . .	10.	"	Harriet E. . .	5.	"
Archibald . . .	8.	"	Miller, Elbridge G. . .	40.	"
Elizabeth A. . .	5.	Mass.	Hulda . . .	37.	"
Sarah J. . .	2.	"	Charles E. . .	18.	"
McDowney, John . . .	48.	Ire.	Ruth A. . . .	16.	"
Bridget . . .	40.	"	Jonathan G. . .	14.	"
McDonald, James . . .	40.	"	Betsy J. . . .	11.	"
Mary . . .	13.	Mass.	Sarah E. . . .	8.	"
Abraham, jun. . . .	10.	"	Elbridge E. . . .	5.	"
Abraham . . .	76.	Ire.	Herbert G. . . .	11 mo.	"
Mary . . .	72.	"	Morse, Willard	44.	"
McGinley, John	38.	"	Asenath	37.	"
Mary . . .	40.	"	Eliza A. . . .	14.	"
Mary A. . .	11.	Mass.	Lysander C. . . .	11.	"
James . . .	10.	"	Sarah E. . . .	8.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Elbridge G. . .	4.	Mass.	Caroline A. . .	26.	Mass.
Morton, Edmund . .	56.	Me.	James M. Donald . .	13.	N.H.
Hannah Hammond	43.	"	Plunket, Patrick . .	38.	Ire.
Abbie M. Hammond	16.	"	Margaret . .	43.	"
Muntz, William H. .	30.	Eng.	Catharine . .	19.	"
Alice . . .	27.	"	John . . .	16.	"
Alfred Parker . .	25.	"	Mary . . .	15.	"
Sarah Parker . .	23.	"	Thomas . .	9.	"
Catharine Smith . .	18.	Ire.	Bridget . .	7.	"
Catharine Smith . .	20.	Mass.	Patrick . .	5.	"
Maloy, John . . .	50.	Ire.	Perry, Ichabod . . .	66.	Mass.
Bridget . . .	50.	"	Celia D. . .	59.	"
Newcomb, Sylvester	87.	Mass.	Harriet E. . .	22.	"
Roxanna . .	64.	R.I.	Sarah W. . .	20.	"
Newcomb, Asa . . .	25.	Mass.	Perry, Lemuel . . .	73.	"
Ellen . . .	26.	"	Milla K. . .	51.	"
George E. . .	1.	"	George R. . .	19.	"
Josephine Dean . .	14.	"	Perry, Henry C. . .	27.	"
Newcomb, Charlotte S.	38.	"	Nancy E. . .	25.	"
Merrick O. . .	30.	"	Adella P. . .	3.	"
Emily H. . .	20.	"	Florence A. . .	2.	"
Newcomb, Josiah . .	70.	"	Pond, Horace A. . .	37.	"
Nancy . . .	67.	"	Lucy . . .	30.	"
Joseph . . .	31.	"	Edgar A. Perago . .	4.	"
Ruel Cobb . . .	64.	"	Riley, Edward . . .	36.	Ire.
Fanny Fisher . . .	28.	"	Ellen . . .	24.	"
Newcomb, Nathaniel .	58.	"	Mary . . .	3.	Mass.
Betsy . . .	60.	"	Ann . . .	5 mo.	"
Harriet . . .	21.	"	Farel Smith . . .	25.	Ire.
Ellen Burt . . .	22.	Ire.	Redding, Lewis . . .	32.	Mass.
Newcomb, John B. . .	43.	Mass.	Maria A. . .	38.	"
Abigail C. . .	33.	Me.	Adaline . .	7.	"
Abbie C. . .	6.	Mass.	Edwin L. . .	5.	"
Charles H. . .	4.	"	Reed, Stephen D. . .	45.	"
Walter Ross . . .	17.	"	Emily A. . .	46.	"
Mary Dolan . . .	23.	Ire.	Reed, Irena . . .	29.	"
Betsy . . .	79.	Mass.	Orvilla J. . .	10.	"
O'Brien, Andrew . .	64.	Ire.	John F. . .	8.	"
Ann . . .	59.	"	Reed, Lydia . . .	73.	"
Edward . . .	25.	"	Adda . . .	40.	"
Lucinda . . .	22.	Me.	Sarah . . .	13.	"
Pratt, Augustus L. .	44.	Mass.	Abbie J. . .	11.	"
Vashti . . .	41.	"	George . . .	8.	"
Ellen A. . .	11.	"	Richmond, Benjamin .	64.	"
Henry A. . .	4.	"	Mary J. . .	41.	"
John A. Gibson . .	39.	Vt.	Hannah T. Hodges.	30.	"
Palmer, Clara E. . .	25.	Mass.	Richmond, Benj. H. .	34.	"
Clara A. . .	4.	"	Julia A. . .	26.	"
Frederic M. . .	1.	"	Ann M. . .	10.	"
Patten, John . . .	59.	"	Ella E. . .	6.	"
Nancy M. . .	56.	"	William F. Adams.	18.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Richmond, Ward . . .	52.	Mass.	George B. . . .	19.	Mass.
Olive B. . . .	50.	"	Shelley, Libbeus . . .	65.	"
Richmond, David H. . .	23.	"	Lucinda	54.	"
Martha M. . . .	23.	"	Shepard, Jacob . . .	66.	"
Riley, Catharine . . .	50.	Ire.	Mary	60.	"
Owen	19.	"	Mary	26.	"
Faral	17.	"	Catharine	25.	"
John	15.	"	Sheridan, John . . .	45.	Ire.
Patrick	13.	"	Mary	40.	"
Rogers, Charles . . .	40.	Me.	Thomas	7.	Mass.
Harriet F. . . .	39.	Mass.	Bridget	5.	"
Harriet M. . . .	9.	"	John	4.	"
Betsy A. . . .	8.	"	Elizabeth	1.	"
Fanny J. . . .	4.	"	Sinclair, Amos S. . .	54.	Vt.
Emma J. . . .	1.	"	Joanna	52.	Mass.
Robinson, Ruel . . .	40.	"	Sarah L. . . .	23.	"
Eliza	41.	"	Ellen M. . . .	19.	"
Ida A. . . .	11.	"	Mary Keffe	17.	Ire.
Ruel E. . . .	8.	"	Skinner, Albert . . .	25.	Mass.
Adda F. Dunham . .	21.	"	Elizabeth M. . . .	23.	"
Robinson, Mary A. . .	49.	"	Eugene M. . . .	6.	"
Sarah H. . . .	14.	"	Clarance A. . . .	3.	"
Robinson, Edward O. .	20.	"	Orinthia S. Hewitt .	10.	"
Lucinda	21.	"	Rachel Skinner . . .	55.	"
Rockwood, Thomas T. .	41.	"	Skinner, Josephus . .	59.	"
Eveline A. . . .	41.	"	Rebecca	53.	"
Charles H. . . .	13.	"	Marietta A. . . .	21.	"
Franklin Holmes . . .	32.	"	Rebecca O. . . .	16.	"
Rogerson, John R. . .	43.	"	Harriet E. . . .	13.	"
Mary L. . . .	38.	"	Smith, Timothy . . .	62.	"
Ellen A. . . .	16.	"	Charles T. . . .	22.	"
Alfred V. . . .	14.	"	Smith, Noah	68.	"
William B. . . .	8.	"	Nancy	64.	"
Lydia S. . . .	6.	"	Ann A. . . .	27.	"
Sylvanus H. Blanning			Stella A. . . .	22.	"
ding	21.	"	Ellen King	23.	"
Round, Benjamin M. . .	38.	"	Smith, Charles H. . .	34.	"
Sophia	35.	"	Susan	33.	"
Helen R. . . .	5.	"	Smith, James, 2d . . .	45.	Ire.
Arthur M. . . .	3.	"	Bridget	40.	"
Alice A. . . .	10 mo.	"	Catharine	19.	"
John Cormody	16.	Ire.	Andrew	17.	"
Ann Galligan	25.	"	Thomas	15.	"
Hannah Pullen . . .	62.	Me.	Bridget	9.	"
Root, Clarinda . . .	36.	Mass.	Mary	7.	"
Emma F. . . .	10.	"	Rosa	4.	Mass.
Clara M. . . .	3.	"	James	8 mo.	"
Shaw, John	62.	"	Smith, Matthew . . .	45.	Ire.
Polly	59.	"	Ann	43.	"
Marshall	31.	"	John	21.	"
Horatio E. . . .	27.	"	Ann	17.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Eliza	15.	Mass.	Nancy	49.	Mass.
Matthew . . .	12.	"	Nancy Y. . . .	18.	"
Patrick Riley .	35.	Ire.	Sprague, Charles, jun..	50.	"
Michael Murry .	20.	"	Betsy W. . . .	48.	"
Frank Gysl . .	30.	"	Warren C. . . .	21.	"
Smith, Patrick .	22.	Ire.	Betsy A. . . .	18.	"
Julia	21.	"	Mary P. . . .	9.	"
Mary	3 mo.	Mass.	Charles	77.	"
Michael	18.	Ire.	Hannah Kelly . . .	30.	Ire.
Smith, James . .	63.	Mass.	Stanley, Phebe . . .	70.	Mass.
Abigail Freeman .	55.	"	Dilly Hall	88.	"
Smith, James, jun..	33.	"	Stanley, Benjamin D..	37.	"
Rachel L. . . .	29.	"	Harriet E. . . .	35.	Me.
James H. . . .	6.	"	George B. . . .	11.	Mass.
Rachel D. . . .	4.	"	Harriet M. . . .	7.	"
Smith, Seth . . .	58.	"	Laura	2 mo.	"
Sarah M. . . .	51.	"	Stedman, Patrick . .	24.	Ire.
Mary E. . . .	16.	"	Bridget	25.	"
Herbert R. Arnold.	8.	"	John	1.	Mass.
Smith, Stillman .	61.	"	Mary	56.	Ire.
Eunice	61.	"	Stephens, Benjamin M.	47.	Mass.
Eunice M. . . .	31.	"	Ann E. . . .	49.	"
William W. . . .	22.	"	Ann E. . . .	18.	"
Smith, Stillman L. B..	28.	"	Polly Field	72.	"
Ann E. . . .	29.	"	Story, George W. . .	36.	"
Frank L. . . .	1.	"	Delia M. . . .	28.	"
Smith, Henry . .	28.	Conn.	George H. . . .	7.	"
Sarah	29.	"	Adelia M. . . .	6.	"
Dwight D. . . .	4.	"	Story, Thomas . . .	67.	"
Smith, Peter . .	34.	Ire.	Betsy	63.	"
Bridget	33.	"	A. Thorton	30.	"
Philip	24.	"	Elmira A. . . .	16.	"
Smith, George W. .	30.	Mass.	Stone, Larnard . . .	60.	"
Alvin P. . . .	28.	"	Rebecca	71.	"
Daniel B. . . .	25.	"	Lucinda	62.	"
Lydia A. . . .	22.	"	Earl W. . . .	58.	"
Alvin	58.	"	Fanny	56.	"
Lydia	57.	"	Sumner, Seth . . .	55.	"
Smith, Lucinda . .	52.	"	Ruth A. . . .	49.	"
Hannah L. . .	29.	"	Ruth	86.	"
Smith, Nathan . .	47.	"	Sweatland, Rufus . .	75.	"
Olive	44.	"	Clarissa	78.	"
Caroline M. . .	17.	"	Sweatland, Edwin . .	46.	Me.
Sanford E. . . .	16.	"	Philinda	46.	"
Bradford	14.	"	Ann E. . . .	10.	Mass.
Lauretta	12.	"	James E. . . .	8.	"
Emerson W. . .	10.	"	Anjenette	7.	"
Eliza A. . . .	8.	"	Lydia M. . . .	5.	"
Matilda J. . . .	6.	"	Marietta	1.	"
Everett A. . . .	3.	"	Sweet, William . . .	62.	"
Snow, Joseph . .	67.	R.I.	Lydia	55.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Sweet, Serena . . .	56.	Mass.	Lydia A. Arnold . . .	23.	Mass.
Sweet, Cyril S. . . .	38.	"	Titus, Oliver S. . . .	51.	"
Mercy A. . . .	35.	"	Angeline	48.	"
Isabella A. . . .	9.	"	Emily A. . . .	25.	"
Cyril F. . . .	4.	"	Henry O. . . .	17.	"
Ida R. . . .	3 mo.	"	Oren E. Walker . . .	23.	"
Sweet, Betsy S. . . .	70.	"	Tripp Thompson . . .	63.	"
Betsy J. . . .	39.	"	Nancy	62.	"
Sweet, Alanson . . .	43.	"	Alice Smith	75.	"
Lydia	45.	"	Caroline L. Smith . .	24.	"
Alanson E. . . .	14.	"	Catharine Linard . .	15.	Ire.
Benjamin F. . . .	11.	"	Tucker, Polly H. . . .	61.	Mass.
Leander	6.	"	Mary A. . . .	23.	"
Albert L. . . .	3.	"	Elizabeth L. C. . . .	16.	"
Sweet, Benjamin R. .	36.	"	Tucker, Allen B. . . .	61.	"
Rhoda M. . . .	30.	"	Alice	47.	"
Sweet, George M. . .	47.	"	Harriet N. . . .	21.	"
Sarah W. . . .	37.	"	Charles B. . . .	17.	"
George A. . . .	15.	"	James E. . . .	12.	"
Frederic M. . . .	12.	"	Tucker, Almond . . .	51.	"
Mary	88.	"	Nancy	33.	"
Sweet, Oliver	49.	"	Almond H. . . .	25.	"
Sweet, Hezekiah . .	30.	"	Moses H. . . .	20.	"
Lydia W. . . .	29.	"	David A. . . .	18.	"
Sweet, Eliza	44.	"	George N. . . .	16.	"
Amelia T. . . .	19.	"	Frank M. . . .	14.	"
Eliza	17.	"	Ann E. . . .	13.	"
Sarah T. . . .	15.	"	Rosco L. B. . . .	9.	"
Sweet, Benjamin . .	58.	"	Tucker, Albert S. . .	44.	"
Lydia D. . . .	57.	"	Abigail	40.	"
Benjamin E. . . .	27.	"	Lydia	15.	"
Sophia C. . . .	26.	"	Emily A. . . .	13.	"
Orville B. . . .	24.	"	Mary E. . . .	10.	"
Aurelia J. . . .	22.	"	Albert W. . . .	3.	"
Sweet, Joseph D. . .	53.	"	Benajah	80.	"
Abby A. . . .	49.	"	Tucker, George W. . .	29.	"
Lewis H. . . .	17.	"	Eunice L. . . .	21.	"
Abbie A. . . .	15.	"	Charles H. . . .	1.	"
Joseph F. . . .	12.	"	Washburn, James S. .	49.	"
Andrew H. . . .	9.	"	Betsy	51.	"
Sweet, James M. . . .	43.	"	Joseph H. . . .	19.	"
Sophia J. . . .	43.	"	Alexander		
Ann M. . . .	18.	"	D. . . .	13.	"
Elvira O. . . .	15.	"	Ann F. . . .	10.	"
Otis J. . . .	11.	"	Sally Bryant	77.	"
Samantha K. . . .	8.	"	West, William A. . .	54.	"
Tinkham, Ebenezer .	42.	"	Ann B. . . .	53.	"
Adaline	44.	"	Mary B. . . .	17.	"
Abbie M. . . .	11.	"	Frederic M. . . .	15.	"
Frederic W. . . .	10.	"	Anna B. . . .	12.	"
Howard A. . . .	8.	"	John	22.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Job W. Hall . . .	86.	Mass.	Marcus W. . .	12.	Mass.
Nancy Hall . . .	76.	"	Roby . . .	94.	"
Mary Timmings . . .	24.	Ire.	Wheeler, Wheaton . . .	60.	"
West, Hiram . . .	28.	Mass.	Eliza . . .	30.	"
Arminthia . . .	18.	"	White, Howe . . .	73.	"
Wetherell, William . . .	59.	"	Temperance . . .	64.	"
Electia . . .	53.	"	White, Cyrus . . .	67.	"
Lemuel . . .	16.	"	Asenath . . .	51.	"
Wetherell, William, jr. . .	30.	"	Hennary Newcomb . . .	52.	"
Emily E. . .	29.	"	White, Jason . . .	38.	"
Ellen I. . .	7.	"	Lydia . . .	23.	Me.
Frank J. . .	3.	"	Jason L. . .	17.	Mass.
Mary A. . .	2.	"	Betsy A. . .	14.	"
William . . .	6 mo.	"	Emory L. . .	7.	"
Wetherell, Hiram H. . .	45.	"	William N. . .	5.	"
Lurinda S. . .	41.	"	Otis A. . .	4.	"
E. Sidney . . .	25.	"	White, George, jun. . .	40.	"
Eliza J. . .	14.	"	Sarah . . .	41.	"
Ann Callaghen . . .	19.	Ire.	Sarah E. . .	12.	"
Wetherell, Caleb S. . .	42.	Mass.	White, Isaac . . .	72.	"
Cordelia E. . .	40.	"	Sophia . . .	71.	"
Caleb B. . .	10.	"	Sophia H. . .	40.	"
George L. . .	7.	"	Marrietta . . .	30.	"
Chloe E. . .	2.	"	White, George A. . .	21.	"
Wetherell, Benjamin C. . .	38.	"	Polly A. . .	24.	"
Sarah L. . .	36.	"	White, John H. . .	25.	"
Thomas B. . .	17.	"	Ellen J. . .	21.	"
Charles H. . .	15.	"	White, Earl C. . .	35.	"
Edwin B. . .	6.	"	Elizabeth A. . .	34.	"
Anna L. . .	3.	"	Sarah E. . .	13.	"
Frederic A. . .	7 mo.	"	Lewis E. . .	10.	"
Sarah Sweet . . .	65.	"	Mary J. . .	7.	"
Wetherell, Stillman A. . .	33.	"	Lloyd E. . .	5.	"
Adaline . . .	28.	"	Isaac Dean . . .	38.	"
Ellen A. . .	5.	"	Betsy O. White . . .	38.	"
George Clark . . .	13.	"	Joel F. White . . .	26.	"
Wetherell, William D. . .	24.	"	Williams, Lyman D. . .	35.	"
Celia . . .	53.	"	Harriet J. . .	27.	"
Susannah . . .	70.	"	Lyman F. . .	1.	"
Wheaton, Laban M. . .	58.	"	Williams, Greenleaf . . .	50.	"
Eliza B. . .	45.	"	Julia A. . .	46.	"
Bradbury Hall . . .	24.	"	Williams, Betsy . . .	80.	"
Sarah Moody . . .	24.	"	Selina . . .	58.	"
Ellen Stockbridge . . .	49.	"	Sally G. . .	54.	"
Wheeler, Elkanah . . .	48.	"	Benjamin . . .	48.	"
Rhoda R. . .	60.	"	Achsah . . .	45.	"
Rhoda A. . .	17.	"	Willis, Calvin . . .	58.	"
Clara B. Richardson . . .	4.	"	Sally . . .	52.	"
Wheeler, Williams B. . .	51.	"	Emery E. . .	22.	"
Lydia . . .	43.	"	Lewis H. . .	17.	"
Lydia A. . .	17.	"	Laura J. . .	16.	"

	Age.	Where Born.		Age.	Where Born.
Willis, Ichabod . . .	47.	Mass.	Stephen J. . .	17.	Mass.
Hannah . . .	39.	Pa.	Mary A. H. . .	12.	"
Henrietta . . .	12.	Mass.	George Pitts . . .	26.	N.Y.
Harriet M. . .	9.	"	Woodward, Isaac . . .	67.	Mass.
Rosilla A. . .	6.	"	Amity . . .	53.	"
Emily A. . .	2.	"	Woodward, Isaac D. . .	26.	"
Hannah S. Allen . .	15.	N.H.	Naomi . . .	25.	"
Willis, Loren . . .	45.	Mass.	Charles E. . .	4.	"
Eliza . . .	46.	"	Barney F. . .	2.	"
Loren B. . .	14.	"	Albert D. . .	10 mo.	"
Ebenezer B. . .	11.	"	Woodward, Bradford N. . .	47.	"
Wilbur, Oren . . .	56.	"	Sarah L. . .	49.	"
Polly . . .	54.	"	Bradford J. . .	21.	"
Lemuel K. . .	18.	"	Mary E. . .	17.	"
Polly Aldrich . . .	84.	"	Sarah A. . .	14.	"
Wilbur, Oren, jun. . .	30.	"	Fidelia . . .	13.	"
Lydia L. . .	23.	"	Joseph . . .	10.	"
Frederic O. . .	4.	"	Herbert . . .	5.	"
Charles L. . .	2 mo.	"	Woodward, Ann M. . .	45.	"
Daniel Smith . . .	23.	"	Ann M. . .	15.	"
Wilbur, Oliver K. . .	45.	"	Caroline J. . .	13.	"
Sabrina . . .	46.	"	Alfred W. . .	11.	"
Cynthia . . .	17.	"	Phebe A. . .	8.	"
Eunice . . .	13.	"	Charles H. . .	5.	"
Wilbur, Benjamin . .	26.	R.I.	Helen O. . .	2.	"
Caroline A. . .	26.	Mass.	Woodward, David . .	71.	"
Joseph B. . .	4.	R.I.	Sally . . .	52.	"
Maria J. . .	3.	"	Marcus R. Peck . .	15.	"
Charles E. . .	10 mo.	"	George B. Lincoln . .	25.	"
Wild, George W. . .	27.	Mass.	Woodward, Josiah . .	74.	"
Elizabeth B. . .	27.	N.J.	Lurana . . .	51.	"
George W. . .	8 mo.	Mass.	Josephus . . .	12.	"
Wrigley, James L. . .	32.	"	Albert . . .	10.	"
Mary E. . .	21.	"	George . . .	7.	"
Elizabeth M. . .	17.	"	Patrick Casety . . .	31.	Ire.
Wood, Elkanah . . .	85.	"	James Donohue . .	15.	"
Wood, Elkanah, jun. .	57.	"	Margaret Kelly . .	19.	"
Lemira . . .	54.	"	Woodward, Josiah, jun.	30.	Mass.
Catharine L. . .	23.	"	Cassandal . . .	29.	"
Nathaniel H. . .	13.	"	Cassandal . . .		
Wood, Eli . . .	54.	"	A. . .	3.	"
Fanny M. . .	28.	"	Anne J. . .	1.	"

Consisting of four hundred and ten families, and eighteen hundred and eighty-six persons; of whom there are two hundred and fifty-three farmers, thirty-nine copper-smiths, twenty-six laborers, twenty-five shoemakers, seventeen whose occupation is not given, fifteen carpenters, nine weavers, eight basket-makers, eight ma-

chinists, eight bonnet-pressers, eight masons, seven merchants, seven moulders, three clergymen, three cotton-spinners, three painters, three stonecutters, two butchers, two blacksmiths, two depot-masters, two millers, two manufacturers, one physician, one grinder, one rôper, one teamster, one carder, one overseer, one horse-dealer, one harness-maker, one box-maker, one bonnet-manufacturer, one teacher, one clerk, one jobber, one hotel-keeper, eleven paupers, nine colored, three idiotic, and two insane.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PAUPER HISTORY.

“Ye have the poor always with you.” — CHRIST.

It has already been stated, on page 83, that Mrs. Susannah Harvey was one of the first paupers; and, so far as we know, she was the first supported by the town. Mary Merry — sometimes called “Goode Merry” — was a pauper as early as 1723; and others of the Merry family, of two or three generations, are known to have been a public charge. Zipporah Caswell was a pauper in 1726, and many years subsequently. The people, in ancient times, took every possible precaution to prevent immigrants becoming paupers. Hence it was customary, when a person moved into town, to “warn him out,” no matter whether he was a man of property or not; and, in many cases, the constable carried the individual out of town, if he would not go of his own accord. Even females were frequently notified to “depart beyond the limits of the town.” This practice of warning and carrying out of town seems to have been continued till about 1770, and to have been revived in

1790; and the last warrants for this purpose we have found are dated in 1794. We should have given the names of the persons warned away, if we could have found a complete list. We here present to our readers one of these warrants, which will serve to show the manner of proceeding:—

“BRISTOL ss. — To either of the Constable of Norton in sd. County of Bristoll, Greeting. — Whereas Benjamin Lane, Late of Dorchester, is Lately Come to Sojourn in the Towne of Norton; and he hath not Gott bondsmen for the towne-Scurety, in Case he Should Come to be a towne-Charge, — These are, in his majestie’s name, to Require you to warne the sd. Benjamin Lane, that he depart out of the towne of Norton within the Space of fourteen days after warning Given him to depart; and make Returne hereof, with your doings herein, forthwith after you have warned him out. Given under our hands, ye 17th day of May, anno dom. 1722, in the eighth year of his majestie’s Reign.

“THOMAS SKINNER, }
NICHOLAS WHITE, } Selectmen.”
BENJA. WILLIAMS, }

It was also required of those who received a stranger into their house to dwell, or let him a house to dwell in, to give notice of the fact to the town-authorities.

Only two years (1742 and 1743) in the history of the town have overseers of the poor been specially chosen; the selectmen being, *ex officio*, overseers when the town chose none. June 18, 1770, the selectmen were chosen a committee, to join with a committee of Mansfield, to make a division of the poor between the two towns. The report of this committee was accepted by the town, Sept. 2, 1771. From it, it appears that Norton agreed to maintain, if need be, Abigail Leonard, Theodora Leonard, Widow Mary Smith, Asa Eddy (a minor), Samuel Eddy and his wife, Widow Harradon, and Delancy Harradon. Mansfield agreed to maintain, if need be, John Wetherell, Seth Stephens and his wife Abigail, Samuel Stephens (a minor), Zuruiah Hide and her child, and George Tucker. It was further agreed, if any persons should thereafter

be brought from other towns for support in Norton or Mansfield, those who had their last residence within the limits of Norton should be supported by Norton, and those who had their last residence within the limits of Mansfield should be supported by Mansfield. Both towns, in their corporate capacity, ratified this agreement: but, in an action brought by Norton against Mansfield for the support of a pauper, in accordance with this agreement, it was decided by the Supreme Court, in July, 1819, that Mansfield was under no legal obligation on account of any poor, but those who, by virtue of the incorporating Act, acquired a settlement in that district; and hence the agreement was not binding upon Mansfield, because the two towns had no legal power to make such an agreement.¹

Until within a few years, it was the general practice in this town to yearly "vendue the poor;" or, in other words, to sell their maintenance, either separately or together, for the year, to the lowest bidder. To stimulate the people to take the poor at a low figure, spirituous liquors were formerly gratuitously distributed to the crowd who came to "bid off the poor." We regard this venduing of the paupers as one of the most unfeeling and heartless customs that has been rife in New England. It was too much like selling slaves upon the auction-block to meet with the approbation of all; and hence, from time to time, the question of an alms-house, where all could be properly cared for, was discussed. In the warrant for a town-meeting to be on the 2d of December, 1776, there was an article "to consider and determine whether they will hire or build a house for the reception of the poor." We do not find any recorded action upon the matter. Another attempt was made in 1787 to "build a house or houses for the poor," with a like result. Jan. 14, 1793, to build, or not to "build, a house or barrack for the poor," was the question before the town. The

¹ Massachusetts Reports, vol. xvi. p. 48, &c.

meeting was dissolved without any vote upon the article. May 11, 1807, "voted that the selectmen vendue the poor alltogether for one year, and the doctering and clothing to be included." May 13, 1816, "voted that the poor be put out singly for one year, from the first of Sept. next." But a more humane and Christian way of supporting the houseless and moneyless sons and daughters of the town came at last. Nov. 1, 1830, a committee was chosen to inquire into the expediency of purchasing a farm for the support of the poor, to ascertain the cost of keeping the paupers for the last five years, and to make such other inquiries as they thought proper. The time had not then arrived for heeding the calls of humanity. Yet the idea of an alms-house was not lost sight of, but sought to be practicably carried out. April 7, 1834, the town "voted to dismiss the subject respecting a farm for the poor." In a little more than three years from this last date, or May 31, 1837, the leaven of justice and benevolence had so far done its work, that the town voted, fifty to twenty, to purchase a farm for the poor; and a committee of nine were chosen to make the purchase. The committee bought the farm occupied by John Hall, 2d, in the northerly part of the town, near Mansfield line, consisting of a hundred and ninety acres; and a deed of it was given to the town, Nov. 16, 1837. It was occupied as an alms-house and poor-farm about the 1st of April, 1838; and the poor are still provided for at that place, although a portion of the land has been sold by the town. The following persons have been superintendents of the alms-house since its occupancy for that purpose: John Patten, from April, 1838, to April, 1839; Alanson Makepeace, from 1839 to 1840; Moses Hunt, from 1840 to 1843; Schuyler Freeman, from 1843 to 1846; Moses Hunt, from 1846 to 1851; Ebenezer Burt,¹ from 1851 to 1853; Alanson Makepeace, from 1853 to 1854; Reuben Har-

¹ Mr. Burt died May 1, 1852; and his widow managed the affairs till the following April, when the term of her husband's service was to have expired, had he lived.

low, from 1854 to 1856. Moses Hunt then returned, and is still there.

We take great pleasure in recording the fact, that, just as these pages were going to press, the inmates of the alms-house voluntarily declared to the writer, that they had every thing provided for their comfort they could reasonably expect; that they had no fault to find, either with the superintendent or the overseers; that they did not think there were many towns where the paupers were as well cared for as in Norton. May it ever be so! May the injunction of the sacred proverb ever be heeded! — “Rob not the poor, because he is poor.”

CHAPTER XXV.

PHYSICIANS.

“Throw physie to the dogs: I'll none of it.” — SHAKESPEARE.

THE first notice of a physician that I find is a record on the town-books, under the date of July 13, 1724, when it was “voted that thay would pay doctor Deen out of the next town-rate what ye selectmen shall agree with him, for doctoring Walter Merry's hand.” He is supposed to have lived in Taunton.

Dr. SAMUEL CASWELL appears to have been the first resident physician within the ancient limits of Norton. He is supposed to have been the son of John Caswell (see early settlers); and was born Oct. 6, 1695. The first notice we have of him on our records is Oct. 17, 1726, when the town “voted to Pay to Doctr. Saml. Caswell, for doctoring Goode Merry, 0—15—0.” He, however, bought land in Norton, in 1723, of Lydia Briggs, daughter of Samuel Briggs, deceased; and was then called a “Practitioner of Physick.” Probably about that time, he established himself here as a

physician and farmer. He lived where Benjamin Sweet now (1858) lives; and his house stood three rods over the line, within the present limits of Mansfield. He married, Feb. 5, 1727-8, Ursula White, daughter of Deacon Nicholas White; and had four children. He remained here till about the year 1747, when he died. He is believed to have had a wife, and a son Samuel, previous to his marriage with Ursula White.

Dr. NICHOLAS WHITE was the son of Deacon Nicholas and Experience White (already mentioned), and was born about 1705. He was a practising physician for several years, and resided sometimes in the North and sometimes in the South Precinct of Norton. He married Sarah King, May 1, 1728; and they had six children. He died in the North Precinct, June 29, 1751.

Dr. WILLIAM WARE was the son of John and Mehitable Ware, of Wrentham; and was born July 4, 1697. Feb. 19, 1729, he bought of John Finney the farm now (1858) owned by Sanforth Freeman. He was a "Practitioner of Physick" here for several years, and also kept a public-house from 1728 to 1740. He sold his farm in Norton, Nov. 24, 1750; and moved soon after to Dighton, where he died in 1764 (?). His first wife was Zibiah Sweeting, married Oct. 30, 1728. She died Nov. 1, 1732. His second wife was Anna Hodges, married Sept. 27, 1733. His third wife was Lydia —. He had at least nine children, seven of whom are mentioned in his will.

Dr. JOHN WILD, Jun., was the son of John and Abigail Wild, and was probably born in Braintree in 1727. He is supposed to have lived where George R. Leonard now lives. He married, May 1, 1746, Anna Hodges; and had two or three children. He was buried in the Timothy-Plain Cemetery; and this is the inscription on his gravestone: "In memory of M.D. John Wild, who died December ye 13th, 1756, in ye 30th year of his age."

Dr. LEWIS SWEETING was undoubtedly the son of Lewis and Zibiah (Whiting) Sweeting, of Wrentham,

who were married in 1721, and were afterwards of Rehoboth. He probably came to Norton soon after reaching his majority, and seems to have lived a part of the time within the present limits of the town, and a part of the time in Mansfield; in which town he was one of the Committee of Correspondence and Safety in 1776. He married, Nov. 21, 1744, Abiah Cobb; by whom he had ten children. When he died, we are not informed.

Dr. GEORGE WHEATON was the son of Ephraim and Abigail Wheaton, of Swansea; grandson of Deacon Ephraim and Mary (Mason) Wheaton, of Swansea; great-grandson of Robert (who was in Rehoboth as early as 1643); and was born Aug. 18, 1728. He came to Norton, and commenced practice as a physician, previous to 1750. In that year he bought the place formerly owned by Dr. Caswell, and lived on the Mansfield side of the line for many years. Some time after the incorporation of Mansfield, he removed to the place where L. O. Makepeace now lives, in Norton; where he died, June 4, 1803. He married, Oct. 4, 1750, Elizabeth Morey; and had six children. In 1758, he was surgeon's mate in an expedition for "the total Reduction of Canada." He was much employed in public life as selectman, assessor, representative to the General Court, justice of the peace, &c.

Dr. JONATHAN PRATT is supposed to have been the son of Jonathan and Abigail (Morse) Pratt; and was born Oct. 17, 1729. He lived in the Mansfield part of Norton, some distance to the south-east of Mansfield Centre. He married, 1758, Hepzibah Billings, of Stoughton (now Sharon); but never had any children. He was, in 1757, styled "Doctor" on the "Alarm list" of soldiers in the North Precinct. He died Oct. 13, 1771.

Dr. GIDEON TIFFANY was the son of James, jun., and Elizabeth (Allen) Tiffany, of Attleborough; where he was born Sept. 19, 1737. His grandfather, James Tiffany, came from England. He married Mrs. Sarah

Farrar, the widow of Rev. George Farrar, of Easton,¹ Feb. 8, 1759. She was the daughter of Nathan and Elizabeth (Nicholson) Dean, of Norton. Her father and mother both died within a week of each other, when she was about three years old; and it is supposed that she was immediately, or very soon, taken into the family of Rev. Mr. Avery, and lived with them till her first marriage. After the death of her husband, she probably returned to Mr. Avery's, and lived there till her marriage with Dr. Tiffany; and then he also took up his abode at the old parsonage-house (a picture of which we have given on page 65), where he resided till after the death of Mr. Avery, when he sold the old ministerial farm which he bought a few years previous, and removed to Keene, N.H. About 1782, he removed to Hanover, N.H., and remained there while his sons were in college. He went from Hanover into the State of New York, where he lived for some years; but is supposed to have died, many years ago, at Ancaster, Canada West. He had ten children.

Dr. ADAM JOHNSTONE was a Scotchman by birth, and probably came to Norton about 1772. He married, Oct. 14, 1773, Sarah Hodges. She "died suddenly, Oct. 29, 1781, in her 31st year." He is said to have been a "surgeon in the Revolution."² He kept a public-house in the centre of the town from 1780 to 1787; and, probably soon after the latter year, left town. He is believed to have resided, for a time after leaving here, at Pelham. From thence he went to Danby, Vt.; and died there June 10, 1806.

Dr. DANIEL PARKER was the son of Rev. Jonathan

¹ Mr. Farrar was the son of George, jun., and Mary Farrar, of what is now Lincoln; and was born Nov. 23, 1730; graduated at Harvard, 1751; and died Sept. 17, 1756, of a fever, at his father's house, whither he had gone to visit a sister sick with the same fever, who died a few days previous to him. He was buried at Lincoln. He was the brother of Rev. Joseph Farrar, the first minister of Dublin, N.H. He was married June 2, 1756. His wife was then a minor; and, a few days before his death, he was appointed her guardian.

² Book of the Lockes, by J. G. Locke, p. 169.

Parker, of Plympton; and was born about the year 1750. He was here as early as 1773; and, during most of the time of his residence in Norton, lived on the farm lately owned by Benjamin Blandin, deceased. He married, Dec. 22, 1777, Miss Abigail Hewes, of Wrentham; and had seven children. He died Sept. 26, 1826, aged seventy-six. Feb. 17, 1794, he was commissioned a surgeon of the regiment to which the militia of this town belonged; which office he held for several years.

Dr. NATHANIEL COOK was the son of Paul and Joanna Cook; and was born May 29, 1752. He probably did not practise any great length of time, as he died Oct. 22, 1778; which must have been soon after he completed his medical studies.

Dr. TIMOTHY SMITH was the son of Timothy and Hannah (Hall) Smith, grandson of Seth and Elizabeth Smith; and was born Oct. 17, 1754. He married Anna Morey, Oct. 20, 1778; and had five children. He was a surgeon in the Revolutionary war, but never had a very extensive practice in town. He died Jan. 9, 1794. His widow married Abiel Lincoln; and, during the latter part of her life, received a pension from the government for services rendered by her first husband.

Dr. NATHAN BABBIT was the son of Nathan, jun., and Abigail (Cobb) Babbit, grandson of Nathan and Sarah, and great-grandson of Nathan, who, with his brother Edward, is supposed to have come from England, and settled in Berkley. Dr. Babbit was born in Norton, March 6, 1755. In the year 1778 and the early part of 1779, he was surgeon's mate in the Military Hospital at Providence, R.I. June 24, 1779, he married Anna Newcomb, and located himself at the east part of the town, at the place where Calvin Lincoln now lives. He kept a public-house from 1780 to 1787 or 8. In the summer of 1789, he removed with his family to Westmoreland, N.H., where he continued in the full practice of medicine for "quite

a number of years;" but, during the latter part of his life, he was principally engaged in agricultural pursuits. He had three sons and three daughters, and died April, 1826.

Dr. SAMUEL MOREY was the son of Samuel and Mary (Hodges) Morey, grandson of George and Elizabeth Morey; and was born June 4, 1757. He graduated at Yale College in 1777. He soon after entered the Revolutionary army as surgeon. After the close of the war, he was a practising physician for many years in town, and was quite distinguished in his profession. He lived for many years at the place now occupied by George Barker, on the road to Mansfield. He married, April 19, 1787, Miss Sarah Palmer, daughter of the second minister of this town; and had three children. He died Nov. 8, 1836.

Dr. LEWIS LEPRILETE was a Frenchman by birth, and was naturalized by an Act of the General Court, March 6, 1790. He probably came to this town about the close of the Revolutionary war. He married, March 15, 1784, Mrs. Deborah (Hodges) Allen; and lived, after his marriage, where Mr. L. O. Makepeace now resides. He was a distinguished physician, and had quite a number of medical students while he resided in town. He remained here till about 1792; when he removed to Jamaica Plain (West Roxbury), where he remained two or three years. He then returned to France, and was absent about seven years. On his return to America, he located at Franklin, and remained there till he died. His remains were taken to Jamaica Plain, and the forms of burial were observed; but, before his death, he had given his body to Dr. Warren, of Boston, for anatomical purposes, and it was taken from the grave after the friends had left. "On a marble slab standing in a field on the Boylston estate, about 20 rods from Boylston Street," Jamaica Plain, is an inscription in Latin. The following is a free translation of a portion of it: "In memory of Doctor Lewis Leprilete, member of Mass.



L. Grozier Lith Boston.

Richd. H. Sweet.

Med. Soc.; born in Nantes, France, Oct. 10, 1750; Died July 29, 1804; very celebrated in surgery.”¹ I am told there is a very good portrait of Dr. Leprilete in the possession of Dr. Miller, of Providence, R.I.

Dr. LEAVIT BATES was the son of Leavit and Elizabeth (Pain) Bates, of Mansfield; and was born May 6, 1770. He came to this town, and established himself as a physician, about 1796. For some years, he resided in front of the Trinitarian Meeting-house. He was quite attentive to his patients, and rather moderate in his charges; and hence was quite popular as a physician. He married Hannah Clapp, 2d, in 1797; and had five children. He died Dec. 16, 1850.

Dr. GUILFORD HODGES was the son of Tisdale and Naomi (Hodges) Hodges; and was born Jan. 25, 1778. He fitted for college, and was one year at Brown University. He studied medicine with Dr. Willard, of Uxbridge. He was a practising physician here in 1803, and also taught school the same year. He removed soon after to Phillipston, where he practised till his death in 1815. He married Phebe Maynard, of Phillipston, and had two sons.

Dr. ASA M. ADAMS was the son of Asa and Martha (Metcalf) Adams, and is believed to have been born in Natick about 1795. He was licensed to practise medicine, Aug. 31, 1818, by the Censors of the Rhode-Island Medical Society; and was then said to be of Cumberland, R.I. He came to Norton about 1819, and commenced practice as a physician; and rode quite extensively for some years. By his somewhat intemperate habits, he finally lost the confidence of the community; and removed to Easton about 1841, where he remained a few years; and from thence he went to Taunton, where he died, a bachelor, Oct. 25, 1852.

Dr. RICHARD F. SWEET was the son of John and Eunice (Tucker) Sweet, and was born March 11, 1801. He fitted for college at Andover, and gradu-

¹ See Genealogical Register, vol. x. p. 22.

ated at Brown University in 1824. After graduating, he studied medicine about two years with Dr. Bugbee, of Wrentham; and also attended one or two courses of medical lectures at the Medical College at Boston, where he graduated July 25, 1827; and was soon after appointed Physician of the Marine Hospital at Holmes's Hole, in Tisbury, on the Island of Martha's Vineyard, which office he held for two years, residing at Edgartown during the time. After closing his connection with the hospital, he practised two years at Edgartown. In August, 1831, he removed to his native town; and had quite an extensive practice till his death, March 21, 1841. He married, May 16, 1830, Eliza Milton, of Edgartown; and had three sons and four daughters. He was a very estimable citizen.

Dr. IRA BARROWS was born at Attleborough in 1804, and is the son of Ezra and grandson of Ichabod Barrows. He graduated at Brown University in 1824; but received his medical degree at Harvard in 1827, and immediately entered into practice at Pawtucket. He left there in 1837, and went to the West. In 1840, he returned to Pawtucket, and practised for a few months. He came to Norton in 1841, and was quite popular here and in this vicinity till 1851; when he removed to Providence, R.I., where he now resides, quite distinguished as a physician of the homœopathic school. He married, in 1833, a daughter of the late Oliver Bartlet, of Smithfield, R.I.; and has had four children.

Dr. BENJAMIN M. ROUND was born in Rehoboth, Aug. 11, 1816; and is the son of Benjamin and Devena (Harvey) Round. He studied at Bristol Academy, at Taunton; and also, for about two years, with Rev. Mr. Cobb, of Taunton. He studied medicine with Dr. Swan, of Easton, and Dr. Randall, of Rehoboth; and attended medical lectures at Harvard College in 1841 and 2. He was licensed to practise in 1843, and commenced his professional duties as an allopathic physician. He came to Norton, Sept. 9, 1843. The 1st of April, 1844, he commenced the

homœopathic practice, which he still continues. He married at Norton, Dec. 24, 1845, Miss Seraphene S. Pullen, of East Winthrop, Me.; and had one child by her. She died Sept. 19, 1847. For second wife, he married, Aug. 30, 1849, Miss Sophia Morey, of Taunton (a grand-daughter of Dr. Samuel Morey, already mentioned), and has had four children. He is now the only resident physician in town.

Dr. GEORGE H. RANDALL is the son of Dr. M. R. and Eliza Randall, of Rehoboth, where he was born in 1826 (?). He practised some time with his father, after completing his medical studies. June 1, 1851, he married Mehitable Hodges, of this town, and located here, where he remained till April, 1854; when he removed to his father's, in Rehoboth, where he still resides.

We cannot learn that any other physicians have resided for any length of time here. It is certainly quite an argument in favor of homœopathy, that one physician is now able to attend to the wants of the sick; while, years ago, there were three allopathic physicians here, and all had as many patients as they could well attend to. Allopathic physicians of other towns are frequently called to practise in Norton; and patent medicines, of numberless names, but of doubtful value, find a ready sale here.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BURYING-PLACES, &c.

"Give me no grave where the brier and bramble
Choke the green grass o'er my place of repose."

Miss C. A. BRIGGS.

THE proprietors of the North Purchase, June 9, 1702,
"Voted that the land on the southerly side of the way
to Chartley (and on the westward side of the Town-

line), between said way and Joseph Willis his Land, shall ly perpetually Common for publick uses; not heading Jabez Pratt's land northward."¹

This is what is now called the "Common Burying-ground," southerly of the road leading from Austin Messinger's to Sanforth Freeman's, about a mile and a quarter southerly from the Centre Village. The "town-line" spoken of is the line between the North Purchase and the old town, or original purchase, of Taunton. This is believed to have been the first burying-place formally set apart for that purpose within the present limits of our town.

William Hodges, by some means, is supposed to have come in possession of Joseph Willis's land southerly of this lot set apart for public uses. It is presumed, from the annexed documents, that he wished to bring his house up to the road leading from the meeting-house to George Leonard's ironworks (called Chartley): therefore he (Hodges) took possession of the easterly end of the Common, next to the "Town-line," and built his house near the two elms now standing, where Rev. Mr. Palmer afterwards lived; and, in lieu of this land taken up, he laid down an equal amount of his own, adjoining to, and on the southerly and westerly side of, the burying-ground. The following protests were made against the occupation of this land by Hodges:—

"Whereas there was a piece of land in Taunton North purchase, lying on the south side of the way yt leadeth to Chartley, and on the north side of the land that was Formerly Joseph Willise's, and on the west side of the town-line; which parcel of land was voted and appointed, by the proprietors of said north purchase, to ly perpetually Common for public uses; and there is a burying-place already begun in, and at one end of, said parcel of land,—the other end lying very convenient for a training-field; and whereas William Hodges is about to make some alteration in said common,—viz., to take up the land at the one end, which was designed for a Training-

¹ Proprietors' Records, p. 31.

field, and to lay down some on the other side of the burying-place, — and, in so doing, will bring the burying-place near the middle of the training-field, which will be very inconvenient and unhandsome: We, therefore, whose names are underwritten, being also proprietors in said north purchase, are very unwilling to any such alteration being made, and do here enter our protest against it; as witness our hand, May 15, 1708, — George Leonard, Sylvanus Cambell, Benjamin Gurney, John Foster, Robert Tucker, Samuel Leonard, Samuel Brintnell, Thomas Skinner, Andrew Grover, Thomas Grover, Isaac Shepard, Peter Aldrich, Benjamin Williams, Joseph Brintnell.”

“We whose names are under-written, altho’ we are not proprietors in said north purchase, yet we dwel neer the within-mentioned Common, and are very unwilling there should be any alteration made in it, and do humbly desire there may due care be taken that there be no alteration made in it; as witness our hands, May 17, 1708, — John Cobb, Thomas Braman, Sen., Benjamin Caswel, John Lane, Isreal Fisher, Eliezer Fisher, Ebenezer Eddy, Daniel Braman.”

Notwithstanding these protests, William Hodges, having pitched his habitation on the easterly end of the Common, near the principal highway from Attleborough to Bridgewater, was by no means disposed to pull up stakes, and go into the background; and therefore the town of Norton took up the matter, and, Oct. 6, 1713, voted, —

“That if William Hodges, or his father, give ye Town of Norton a deed of four acres and a quarter and seven Rods of Land, on the south side of the burying-place, and on the west side of it, neer his house¹ in Norton; and procure George Leonard also to Give the Town of Norton a deed of

¹ From an examination of the ground, I am satisfied that Hodges’ house was on the east end of the Common; and not on the west, as these words have been interpreted to mean. What is meant is, undoubtedly, that the “four acres and a quarter and seven rods of land” were near William Hodges’, and bordered upon the south and west side of the burying-place. The oldest graves are near the middle of the ground, as it now is; and the taking-up of the east end for a house-lot, and laying down some at the west end, would bring about such a result as is stated by George Leonard and the other remonstrants. The occupation of the east end would also, as they stated it did, interfere with the training-field. Our oldest inhabitants have no tradition of a house at the westerly end of the Common.

the Remaining part of two acres of Land that was Layd out to him where Norton meeting-house stands, he haveing given the town a deed of part of it already,¹ — yt then, and not els, the selectmen, in the Town's behalf, Give William Hodges a deed of four acres of Land, and a quarter and seven Rods which he hath Already fenced in, and on which his house and barn doth stand on in Norton; and also that thay Give him a deed of a quarter of an acre more, in the corner of the common Land, neer his Barn."

At a meeting of the North-Purchase proprietors, Feb. 3, 1713-14, after the above vote of the town had been read, the said proprietors —

"Voted there concurrence with this vote; with this proviso, that William hodes shall give the deed of the four acres and a quarter and seven rods aforesd., joyning to the burying-place, to George Leonard, John Hodges, and Thomas Stevens, the presant selectmen of Norton, for and in the behalf of the proprietors of the north purchase, for their use and benefit, as well as to the inhabitants of the town of Norton, and to lye perpetually common for publick uses."

The matter, however, was not settled very speedily. Hodges held on to what he had got, with a tenacious grasp. At a meeting of the North-Purchase proprietors, June 15, 1727, —

"Thirdly, in Refference to the Land that William Hodges hath setled upon in said north purchase, that was laid out for a common or for publick uses, the proprietors voated to chuse a committee, and to Leave that affaire with them to deside that matter, by Giveing and takeing deeds of Exchaing of Land on the proprietors' behalf, and said William Hodges to pay the charge therof; the committee to consist of three men. And what said committee doth do on the proprietors' behalf, relating to that affaire, to be and remain firm and Good for Ever."

Finally, April 5, 1728, deeds of exchange of land between Hodges and the North-Purchase proprietors were executed, and the matter permanently adjusted.

¹ This deed was given Dec. 16, 1712; and the amount of land conveyed to the town by it was three-fourths of an acre.

This common-ground was, for many years, used conjointly for a burying-place and a training-field, and the regimental musters were frequently held on this spot; so that it would seem, notwithstanding the encroachments of William Hodges, it was still available for military parades, and all the accompaniments of such occasions. April 5, 1802, the town chose Brigadier Silas Cobb, and Isaac Hodges, jun., a committee "to look into and ascertain the Boundaries of Norton Common, so called." The next year, Laban Wheaton, Esq., Silas Cobb, Brian Hall, Isaac Hodges, and William Burt, were chosen "a committee to settle the bounds of the common." How they discharged their duties, we are left to conjecture; but, until within a recent period, there was no fence or wall or any thing to mark the bounds between the "home of the dead" and the training-field. The four-footed beasts that were turned loose upon the "common" trampled upon the green sod that covered the loved of earth, till the exact resting-place of many was obliterated. This state of things continued till about a quarter of a century since. There was an article in the warrant for a town-meeting, March 7, 1825, "To see if the town will vote to sell a part of Norton Common, and appropriate the money . . . for fencing the burying-ground." It was voted "to request the selectmen to go and find where the road, or roads, ought to run, and where the fence around the burying-ground ought to be set." At the adjourned meeting, May 25, "voted that individuals might fence the burying-ground on Norton Common, so called, without any expense to said town;" and a committee of five were chosen to see where it was most convenient to have the roads run and the fence built. Soon afterwards, the now rather dilapidated stone wall that surrounds the burying-place was built by private contributions of time and money. It is better than nothing, but not what the honor and reputation of the town require it should be.

The Central Burying-ground, near the Trinitarian Meeting-house of Norton, is within the limits of the

old township, or original purchase, of Taunton. Feb. 1, 1710, certain persons —

“Granted to the North Precinct some land to ly on the plain near Richard Briggs’s, to ly common there for a burying-place, or some other publick uses, for the benefit of the said precinct; Said land being Given, by the persons hereafter named, for said use. John Witherell, two acres; Isaac Dean’s heirs, one acre; John Lincoln, one acre; William Leonard, one acre; John Lincoln, Grand Senior, one acre; and Robert Crossman, one acre, — being seven acres in all.”¹

Not a third part of the original seven acres is now occupied as a “burying-place, or other public use.” How it has been diminished, and the changes in and around it, we shall briefly state.

Sept. 9, 1734, the town “voted that George Leonard, Esq., and John Hodges, the 1st, and John Briggs, the 2d, Be a Comitey to tacke Care and Renew the Bounds of the towne’s Comons, neare to the Land of the Eyrs of Richard Briggs, deseased.” Nov. 19, 1742, “Theyr was a voate called for, to Know whether the Towne wold clear aney of the town’s comons by George Briggs; and it past in the negative.”

In the spring of 1753, Gershom Cambell, who lived near by, desired “to clear some of the town’s common land, at or near the burying-place;” but, on May 14 of that year, the town “voted not to give Liberty to Gershom Cambell to clear the Burying-place near William Carpenter’s Orchard, or any part thereof.”

May 21, 1764, the town “voted to exchange some Land with William Carpenter, near sd. Carpenter’s Dwelling-house;” and a committee of three was “Impowered” to give and receive a deed, &c.

At a town-meeting, May 11, 1778, “voted not to act on the article in the warrant with regard to selling the town’s land near Carpenter’s.” Towards a dozen years later, Capt. Isaac Hodges and nine others petitioned for a town-meeting, to see if the town would

¹ Proprietors’ Book (Sixty-four-acre Division), p. 135.

“sell their land which lies near Peter Carpenter’s, and pay some of their debts with the money.” The meeting was held Nov. 9, 1789; and it was “voted to sell the town’s land lying near the house of Peter Carpenter;” and the selectmen were directed “to ascertain the bounds, and measure the same, and lay out a suitable part for a burying-ground.”

At an adjourned meeting, Nov. 23, John Crane, Isaac Hodges, and Nathan Babbit, were authorized to sell at “Publick vendue [this common land,] Except one acre and three-quarters of an acre reserved for a burying-ground, . . . unless sd. Committee shall find, on examining the proprietors’ records, [the town] has not a right to sell the same.” The same persons were further “Instructed, at the same time and in the same mode, to sell the wood standing on the land reserved for a Burying-Ground.”

Probably, on an examination of the proprietors’ books, it was decided that the town had a right to sell it; and it was accordingly disposed of to the highest bidder: and nothing now remains to the town of the original seven acres, except one acre and three-quarters.

When the Timothy-Plain Burying-ground was laid out, is uncertain. Feb. 16, 1742, Benjamin and John Williams deeded to Benjamin Copeland “a meadowlot of two acres,” bounded “Easterly by Goosberrough-meadow River,” and westerly “partly by an acre of Land laid out to John Wetherel for a burying-place.” This must be the ground at Timothy Plain, on the westerly side of Canoe River; for this stream was once called “Goosberry brook.” Whether the lot was intended as a public or private ground, we are unable to say; but most probably for public use. At any rate, it is now considered as public property. This ground is in a sad condition: it is overgrown with bushes and brambles, and unfenced.

It presents a most gloomy aspect to the passer-by, and a melancholy commentary upon the public spirit of the town.

Probably the people in the neighborhood of Winneconnet for many years buried their dead at the old ground (now unused) situated beside the meadow, forty or fifty rods north-easterly of the outlet of the pond, near the line of Taunton.

This ground is, no doubt, the oldest within the limits of Norton, and yet was probably never formally set apart for burial purposes. Here, we presume, was buried the first settler, — William Wetherell. The spot is now situated in a "pasture-lot," and not protected from the tramp of the sheep and cattle that find a home there during the summer months. It was given up on account of its proximity to the meadow; the graves, when dug, becoming partially filled with water. This led to the opening of the burial-places farther up towards Winneconnet Village, which are separated by a narrow road.

The burying-place nearly a mile north-easterly of the schoolhouse, in District No. 5, was originally commenced as a private burial-place by the Babbit Family. From the Babbits the estate passed into the hands of William Cobb, who deeded it to the town for a public burial-place. This deed, in the course of time, was lost, and Judge Wheaton had succeeded to the ownership of the land; who, on being assured that it had once been deeded to the town, gave a new deed of a quarter of an acre to the town for a burial-place. About twenty years ago, a wall was built around this ground by the private contribution of those who had friends interred within.

There are many other places — most, if not all, of them of a private character — where the dead lie buried in town. It is to be hoped, however, that these private grounds may not be increased. For many reasons, it is better that there should be but few cemeteries in a town; for where there are so many "private grounds," or even a multiplicity of public ones, it is difficult to make an appropriation to keep the cemeteries in a respectable condition.

And this difficulty was experienced here no longer

ago than 1854, when the attempt was made by the town to beautify and adorn our burying-grounds; which were, and still are, in a most lamentable condition. We hope, however, for the honor and credit of the town, that these habitations of the dead will remain not long in their present poverty-stricken condition.

HEARSE.

Until within the memory of many now living, there was no hearse in town for the transportation of the dead to the place of burial. April 2, 1804, the town "voted to build one hearse, to be kept at the centre of the town." Previous to this time, the dead were always carried — and in some instances, of course, several miles — on a bier, upon the shoulders of the bearers. Where the distance was long, others besides the bearers joined in the procession, for the purpose of "taking turns" at carrying the dead.¹

April 1, 1805, the town "voted to build or buy a house to put the hearse in;" and the selectmen were to have the oversight of the matter. A house was built near the end of the horse-sheds, back of the old Meeting-house, on the northerly side of the Centre Common, a few feet from where the Hayscales now are.

Here it remained until 1837, when the town consented that it "might be removed to the corner of the burying-ground, near Dr. Leavit Bates's, if it can be done free of expense to the town," &c.; and it was accordingly removed. The same year, Nov. 14, the town agreed to purchase a suitable hearse and harness. Sept. 30, 1839, the selectmen were authorized "to repair the Hearse-House as much as they think proper, at the expense of the town." In 1856, a new hearse was purchased by a vote of the town, at an expense of

¹ Mr. David Makepeace, the oldest man now living in town, informs me he has assisted in carrying more than fifty corpses in this way; and does not recollect seeing a single corpse carried to the grave in any kind of a carriage till the hearse was purchased.

two hundred dollars; making the third hearse the town has owned within a little more than fifty years. The first time this new hearse was used,¹ it was found to be too small to admit the coffin of the deceased; and the old hearse had to be sent for to carry the corpse to the grave.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE OLD FRENCH AND THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR.

“Ez fer war, I call it murder;
There you hev it, plan an’ flat:
I don’t want to go no furdur
Than my Testyment fer that.”

BIGLOW PAPERS.

THOUGH we like not war, nor any of its works; though we believe, that, in every instance, all difficulties between nations might be settled without a resort to the sword,—still our duty as an historian compels us faithfully to chronicle those events wherein man,—

“Like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven
As make the angels weep.”

In the spring of 1744, hostilities between England and France were declared. This war is sometimes called the OLD FRENCH WAR, to distinguish it from that of a subsequent date; but perhaps is more commonly known as KING GEORGE’S WAR. As a matter of course, the hostile feeling between the mother-countries extended to their respective Colonies in America. The most important event this side of the Atlantic, connected with the war, was the attack upon, and capture from the French, of Louisburg, a strongly fortified place on the Island of Cape Breton. A plan for the reduction of this place, communicated by Gov. Shirly,

¹ Nov. 14, 1856, at the funeral of Mrs. Eunice Adams.

was adopted by the General Court of Massachusetts, early in the year 1745, by a majority of *one* vote. A company of soldiers to go on this expedition was raised in Norton and vicinity. In the "History of the Hodges Family," by A. D. Hodges, p. 18, I find "A List of the Soldiers listed to go in the (Expedition) at Cape Breton, under the command of Major Joseph Hodges, Lieut. —, and Ensign Caswell." This was John Caswell, of this town; and, there being no lieutenant, he was soon promoted to that office.¹

We copy only the names of those belonging to Norton: —

Drummer, Thomas Braman; Phillip Atherton, Jeremiah Cambell, Micajah Dorman, Abijah Fisher, John Fisher, Eleazer Fisher, John Forrist, Isaiah Forrist, Samuel Forrist, Thomas Grover, Zepheniah Lane, Ephraim Thayer.

Seven men were transferred from Major Hodges' to Nathaniel Williams's company. Three of these — viz., John Finny, John Finny, jun., and Jonathan Lane — are supposed to have belonged to Norton. From this expedition Major Hodges never returned. One account says, "He died in the early part of the war, when stationed on the lines between the present state of Maine and Canada." Another account says, "that, on his returning voyage [from Cape Breton] in a French vessel, he died suddenly; and there was suspicion that he was poisoned."

He is represented "as a man of a brave, chivalrous spirit."²

I have searched the *Muster Rolls* at the State House, Boston; but can find nothing relating to the company under the command of Major Hodges.

FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR.

After a peace of only a few years' duration, England and France again formally declared war in 1756.

¹ See French-war letters in Genealogical Register, vol. iv. p. 27.

² For further account of him, see deacons, p. 215.

Hostilities between the French and English Colonies in America had, however, been carried on about two years before open war was proclaimed. This war extended from 1756 to 1763. To assist in carrying it on, Norton furnished her full quota of officers and soldiers. In Capt. Nathaniel Perry's company, of Easton, — on service from the middle of June to the middle of September, 1754, employed for the defence of the eastern frontier, — I find the names of the following men belonging to Norton: —

Jonathan Eddy, William Rogers, Levi Lane, Samuel Pratt, Elijah Smith, John Thayer, George Wetherell, Elisha Thayer, and Ephraim Briggs.¹

In the autumn of 1755, in an expedition to Crown Point, were the following persons, either born, or residing at the time, in Norton: —

Samuel Eddy, Eleazer Eddy, Nicholas White, jun., Benjamin Bailey, Joseph Mitchell, Seth Gilbert, Ephraim Briggs, John Cobb, Daniel Tiffany, Nathan Lawrence.²

From a muster-roll of Capt. Hodges' company, dated Boston, May 5, 1756; and also from a return of said company, dated at Albany, May 29, 1756,³ — I take the names of the following Nortonians, who went in an "Expedition against Crown Point." There were others in the company, but they were not of this town.

Capt. Joseph Hodges; Ensign Gideon Basset;⁴ Sergeants Oliver Eddy, John Thayer; Corporals George Braman,⁴ Obediah Eddy;⁴ Thomas Winchel, John White, Martin Dassance, Joseph Tucker, Samuel Brintnell,⁴ Josiah King, Joseph Brintnell, Jonathan Newland, Jotham Basset, Elkanah Wellman, Elisha Thayer, Isaac Day,⁴ David Coleson,⁴ John Holmes, John Martin,⁵ Thomas Nichols, David Smith, Jacob Grover, James Pearson.

¹ Muster Rolls, 1749–55.

² Ibid. 1749–55, pp. 192, 245.

³ Ibid. 1755–6, pp. 176 and 337; where ages may be seen.

⁴ These men are supposed to have been killed with Capt. Hodges (see Muster Rolls, 1757, p. 266).

⁵ Dead before May 29, 1756.

Capt. Hodges, who commanded this company, was the son of Major Joseph, already mentioned; and was the first child baptized here after the church was gathered. He was a man of "desperate bravery." Probably while stationed near Lake George, "he went out on what was termed an Indian Scout" (a kind of service requiring great prudence and courage), and, with his whole party, fell into the hands of the Indians; and they were all killed, Sept. 19, 1756, except one man by the name of William Merry. Merry was taken prisoner, but finally returned home to relate the melancholy fate of his brave but unfortunate captain and associates.

The following is William Merry's account of the death of Capt. Hodges, as given by Rev. Joseph Hodges, of North Oxford, Mass., in a letter to A. D. Hodges, Esq.: ¹ —

"Capt. Hodges volunteered his services on this occasion, and those who accompanied him were volunteers. His command numbered sixty men. The company had marched nearly to the point designated in the order given to Capt. Hodges, when he made a halt for the purpose of refreshment. A party was despatched to the lake, with canteens, for water. They returned immediately with the alarming information, that they saw on the shore of the lake hundreds of fresh tracks of Indians in the sand. The order was immediately given to resume the march. The company had proceeded but a short distance, when the firing from every quarter convinced them that they were surrounded by Indians. Capt. Hodges charged his men 'to fight for their lives.' He set his men the example by the energetic use of his own gun — which he carried on this occasion — instead of his sword. But they were overpowered by numbers. Merry's testimony was that he fought by the side of his commander, who was first wounded in the ankle by a musket-ball; when he dropped on his knees, and continued to fire, and encourage his men. Another ball struck him in the breast. Placing one hand on the wound to check the flowing blood, with his musket in the other he still kept the Indians at bay, one

¹ Hodges Family, p. 16.

of whom reached forward to sever his scalp. Foiled thus, the Indian levelled his gun, and shot him through the head, when the brave captain fell. It was Merry's custom to relate with pride that he killed the Indian who aimed the last fatal shot at his commander, of whose bravery and character he spoke in the highest terms. After being a prisoner with the Indians five years, Merry made his escape, and returned to Norton; where he passed the remainder of his days in a quiet and humble life. He had the reputation of being an honest, simple-hearted man; and his statement may be relied on as faithful."

From the return of Benjamin Williams's company, of Easton, dated "Boston, the 7th May, 1756;" and from a return of the same company, raised for the expedition against Crown Point, dated Fort Edward, 26th of July, 1756,¹ — I extract the names of those who were born in or hailed from Norton at that time; viz. : —

Clerk, John Basset; Nathaniel White,² William Merry, Ebenezer Turner, Nicholas Smith.

This Capt. Benjamin Williams was great-grandfather of our townsman, Rodolphus H. Williams, Esq., in whose family is a standard, said to have been taken from the French in this war. It is a curious relic of olden times. The design, painted on both sides, is a human face, dotted all over with eyes; and underneath is the motto, "VIGILANTIBUS." We believe the tradition relative to this "standard" is very unreliable; for, in different branches of the family, it is very conflicting. Mr. Williams has also in his possession a pair of "smoking-tongs," that belonged to his ancestor, Capt. Benjamin Williams; whereon his name is engraved, and dated "FORT WM. HENRY, 1756." They are very curiously made, and are worthy of an examination as an article of camp furniture one hundred years ago.

In the return of Capt. David White's company,³ of

¹ Muster Rolls, 1755-6, pp. 193 and 332.

² He was dead Feb. 24, 1757 (see Muster Rolls for that year, p. 197).

³ Muster Rolls, 1755-6, p. 356. See also letters of Col. Ephraim Leonard, Muster Rolls, 1755-6, pp. 248-9 and 339-40.

Mendon,—who was also in the Crown-Point expedition of 1756,—are a few names of Norton men:—

Lieut. Nathan Hodges, Josiah Tucker, Thomas Ray, Joseph Woodard, Joseph Mitchell, Robert Craig, Job Tucker.¹

Phillip White was in an expedition for the reduction of Canada in 1758; and George Wheaton was surgeon's mate in Thomas Doty's regiment for the same purpose the same year. Four men from Norton went on an expedition to Crown Point in Capt. Thomas Cobb's company,² of Taunton; the time of service, from May 11, 1759, to Jan. 2, 1760. First lieutenant, Ephraim Lane; Nathaniel Lane, Simeon Cobb, Abiel Lane.

From May 12, 1759, to Jan. 2, 1760, Capt. Nathan Hodges, of Norton, was out with a company of men from this town, whose names we here record:³—

Second Lieutenant, Elijah Hodges; Ensign, John King; Sergeants, Ephraim Hodges, Silas Cook, Israel Trow, Abiel Eddy; Corporals, William Puffer, Hezekiah King; Privates, Elkanah Bishop, John Cook, William Dean, Record Franklin, David Fisher, Joseph Hart, David Hodges, Abraham Martin, Benjamin Morey, Solomon Trow, Ebenezer Titus, Nathan Wood, Benjamin Willis, Josiah White, Nathaniel Wood, Henry White.

John Hall, of Norton, was out in Capt. Burt's company, of Milton.

In Capt. Job Williams's company, of Taunton, from Feb. 13 to Dec. 26, 1760, there were, belonging to Norton,—

Benjamin Briggs, Benjamin Cole, Jonas Caswell, Hezekiah Drake, Jacob Grover, Joseph Mitchell, Stephen Ranger, Isaac Tucker, Henry White.⁴

In 1760 and 61, there enlisted, for the total reduction of Canada, from Norton,—

¹ Deserted.

² Muster Rolls, 1758–60, p. 374.

³ Ibid. 1758–60, p. 379.

⁴ See Muster Rolls, 1760–1, pp. 244–6.

Isaac Tucker, Jacob Hoor, Joseph Mitchell, Daniel Wetherell, William Dean, jun., Henry White, jun., Jonathan Caswell, Samuel Ranger, Obediah Brintnell, and Abiel Caswell.

The foregoing comprise all the names of soldiers I have been able to find, who were engaged in the French and Indian war. A more thorough search of the Muster Rolls would undoubtedly have added some names to the list.¹ It must be borne in mind, that Mansfield, during this war, had not been taken from Norton; and therefore some of these persons belonged in that part of the town.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

“Give me liberty, or give me death.” — HENRY.

THE town of Norton took an active part in the struggle for liberty which commenced at Lexington and Concord on the 19th of April, 1775, and virtually ended with the surrender of Lord Cornwallis on the 19th of October, 1781. Of the remote and proximate causes of the war, our limits forbid us to speak very particularly. We must content ourselves with referring only to those in reference to which our town took a part.

The Stamp Act of 1765 seems to have been the first in the series of tyrannical edicts that aroused the public indignation of our townsmen. This Act was to go into operation on the 1st of November, 1765. A town-meeting of the citizens of Norton was convened Oct. 21 “to see if the town will vote to give instruc-

¹ Hon. Cromwell Leonard tells me, that his father, Jonathan Leonard, was out in this war; that he has heard his father say he was in Nova Scotia, in the army, the day he was twenty-one years old. If this is true, he was there April 17, 1759; he being twenty-one on that day. Without doubt, some of the Muster Rolls have been lost, and, with them, the names of some who served their country in the army.

tions to the representatives relating to the important affairs of this Province ;” and the following address to the representative was adopted :—

“To George Leonard, Jun., Esqr.

“SIR, — In the present mallancholy situation of the province, while we groan under a most destresing load of public and private debts, as trade seems to be departing from the colonies; and more especially as The time is at hand when the act called the stamp act, if carried Into execution, must give the finishing stroke to every thing that Is dear to us as men and Englishmen, — we think it a duty we owe ourselves and posterity to communicate to you our sentements; That both you and wee may use our utmost endeavours to preserve Those Rights and priviledges that our forefathers purchased so Dearly, and transmitted to us for an unalianable Inheretance. undoutedly we are entitled to the priviledges and Imunities of Englishmen. we venture to assert, that we have Rights founded in Nature, confirmed by charters, and granted by the brittish constitution Itself. Every attempt, therefore, to divest us of them, must be looked upon as arbetrary and unconstitutional; and ought to be opposed by all means that are warranted by the Laws of God, the Brittish constitution, an the common Rights of mankind. the stamp act, made and passed In the Brittish parliment, — where the coleneys have no Representatives, even without the hearing of any one Remonstrance against it, out of the many decent and dutiful ones, that, at a vast Expence, ware presented, as we apprehend, through a wicked misrepresentation of our circumstances, — subjects the Colinies to so great and disproportionate tax as they are unable to pay, and, if Insisted upon, must end in their final Ruin; and also subjects us to the desposition (?) of a Judge of admiralty in numerous enternal matters, without being allowed the Inestimable priviledge of a trial by a Jury. we therefore take the freedom to say, that we look upon This act as an Innovation at least; Replete with Inconveniences; Ruinous not only to amarican Liberty, but, in its consequences, to the Brittish constitution itself, should so dangrous a precedent be deemed constitutional. Therefore we cannot think It our duty to Instruct you to Joyn in any publick measures For assisting in the execution of the same; but, on the contrary, expect that you use every method to prevent its being carried into execution, that is consistant with our allegience

to the best of Kings. we likewise take the opportunity to express our detestation of mobs and all outrageous proceedings; being sensible That an unthinking, misguided mob is the worst of tyrants, and monarchy the worst state of slavery. nevertheless, we cannot Think ourselves any answerable for the damage that particular persons may have suffered in the Late disturbances; and expect that you oppose every attempt to their being compensated out of the publick money; that you oppose all unconstitutional and unaccustomed grants, and endeavour the greatest frugality may be observed in all disposition of the public monies whatever. we would further observe to you, that if any safe method can be found out to prevent the courts of Justice from being shut up, and The province plunged into all the distresses of an outlawry, and whereby the trade of the province may be yet upheld, we expect your prudence will direct you to embrace it."

It will be seen by this document, that the people of this town, almost a hundred years ago, did not believe in the doctrine, that we must submit to a wicked and unjust law. It was the bold and manly refusal of the Colonies to obey this unrighteous decree that caused its speedy repeal, and also inspired the great Lord Chatham, in the British Parliament, to say, "he rejoiced that the colonies had resisted, and he hoped they would resist to the last drop of their blood."

At a meeting, Dec. 2, 1766, the town voted to make up "the losses which several persons suffered in the late disturbance in Boston." Encroachments upon the rights and liberties of the Colonies, in one form and another, continued. Jan. 11, 1773, the town met "to act on the petition or application of Israel Woodward and eleven others, of Norton. Sd. application is as follows:—" —

"Sensible of the alarming situation of our publick affairs, in the many Incroachments made of late on our most valuable Rights and privileges, and the several Infringements and violations of the just Rights of this province, which concerns Every town; furthermore, to take these matters into consideration, and pursue such measures as may be thought Best on such an occasion, and to give such Instructions to our Representative as we shall then think proper."

At the meeting, "it was put to vote, whether the In-croachments and Infringements, as mentioned in the warrant, be a grievance to us; and it passed in the affirmative.

"Then chose a committee to consider and report, at the adjournment of this meeting, what is proper to be done."

Met again on the 18th inst., and chose William Cobb "a committee-man, in the room of the Hon. George Leonard, Esq.;" and adjourned to March 15. Then accepted the report of the committee, and "voted that the Clerk of the town transmit a Copy of said Report to the Committee of Correspondence at Boston."

The letter sent to Boston reads thus: —

"GENTLEMEN, — In ansure to your Letter of the 20th of november Last, and with Reference to the pemphlet which accompanied it, we beg leave to Say, that we think the generality of your Sentiments are well Expressed with regard to our publick Rights, and the Infrengements of them. we Did not Receive them till we ware assured the General Court would Sett in a few days; and as it was our opinion that those Important matters not only most properly Came under their Consideration, but that their sentiments would be of much greater Influence, and tend much more to Convince our most gracious Sovering of the sentements of his Loyal Subjects in this province, than the Votes of Towns, we chose, therefore, to wait their Discussion of so Important a point. And, as two Branches of our Legislative have so Unanimously Concurd in your Sentements, it must give you and Every well-wisher to his Country a real Satisfaction, and, in some measure, foreclose any ansure to your request as to our Sentements: yett we Cannot forbare to Testifye our apprehensions of the danger Impending this province, and america in general; and we are so far from being easey and Contented under those Infringements, that we consider them as Saping the Verry foundation of our Constitution. we are senceble of the duty and Interest of our being firmly united in a Cause that so much Concerns our own and our posteritye's wellfare, and are desirous of Cherishing a spirit of patriotism, and to give all due incoragment to our metropolis; and we take this oppertunity to Express our obligations to the Town of Boston for

their Spirited behaviour from time to time in opposing the arbitrary measures of those whom we fear have a desire to inslave us. may the alwise Governer who Ruleth in the Kingdoms of men direct all those to whom is Committed the managment of our publick affairs, and grant them success in their Indeavours for the preservation of our most Valuable Civial and Religious rights and privileges, so as that we may Transmit them to our posterity as they ware Transmitted to us, is the desire, gentlemen, of your friend and Servants in the Common Cause of our Country.

<p>“THOMAS MOREY, WILLIAM HOMES, JOHN CRANE, WILLIAM COBB, GEORGE MAKEPEACE,</p>	}	Committee.”
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In the autumn of 1774, a Continental Congress, composed of deputies from eleven Colonies, met at Philadelphia, and agreed upon a declaration of rights, and recommended the non-importation of British goods into the Colonies until their grievances were redressed.

Jan. 16, 1775, the town “voted to adhear to the advise and Recommendations of the association of the Continental Congress.” They also chose a committee “to see to the faithful performance of the Recommendations of the Continental Congress; only the said Committee, or the major part of them, [should] not expose any person but by order of said town.” The Committee of Correspondence and Inspection consisted of John King, Benjamin Morey, William Smith, Isaac Smith, and Israel Trow. March 6, added to this committee, James Hodges, Noah Wiswall, Eleazer Walker, Elkanah Lane, Benjamin Pearson, David Lincoln, Isaac Hodges, and Eleazer Clap. It was then —

“Voted that the committee of Inspection be Directed to take particular notice of all persons that should sell any cind of provisions to any person or persons that they think is bying with a view to distress the Inhabitants of this province.”

Thus far all had been preparation, though no actual hostilities had commenced; but the ever-memorable 19th of April came, when the streets of Lexington and Concord drank up the first blood of the Revolution. The alarm quickly spread through the country. It reached Norton some time during the day; and, ere the morrow's sun had risen, Capt. Silas Cobb and Capt. Seth Gilbert, each with a detachment of men, were on their march to join with others in repelling the invasion. All of Capt. Cobb's company left home, April 19; and their term of service varied from four to ten days. It is proper that their names go down to posterity; and we therefore record them:—

John Allen, second lieutenant; Nathaniel Prior, sergeant; Nathaniel Stone, corporal; John Hodges, corporal; Abner Tucker, drummer; Abiel Hodges, Tisdale Hodges, Isaac Haradon, Abiel Lincoln, Jonathan Franklin, Noah Woodward, Josiah Woodward, Joseph Hodges, Abijah Fisher, Phillip Hor, Josiah Hodges, Samuel Hodges, David Hodges, privates.¹

The term of service of Capt. Gilbert's men was from four to twelve days. Where no figures are attached to the name, it will be understood that the individual left home April 19; those attached to a name denote the day of April he left.

George Makepeace, first lieutenant; Noah Wiswall, Seth Smith, Eleazar Clap, William Makepeace, sergeants; David Clap, Jonathan Leonard (20), Samuel Hunt (27), corporals; privates, Isaac Smith, John Hall, Seth Smith, jun., Jacob Shepard, Seth Shepard, Stephen Jennings, Noah Wiswall, jun., Jacob Shaw, Antha. Newland (21), Eben Wetherell (21), William Copeland, Noah Clap (20), Stephen Briggs, Phineas Briggs, Levi Babbit, Nathaniel White, Elisha Cobb, Edw. Kingman, John Cook (21), Joseph Newcomb (21), John Crane, jun. (22), Samuel Newcomb, 2d (27), Simeon Wetherell, 2d (26), William Clark (26), Solomon Wetherell, Timothy Briggs, 2d (20), Jona. Briggs, Elijah Briggs, Israel Trow, Seth Williams, Simeon Briggs, Elijah Danforth, Elea-

¹ Lexington Alarm Rolls, vol. xi. p. 255.

zer Walker, Samuel Copeland (20), Edw. Babbit, Reuben Tisdale (27), James Boldery, jun. (27), John Austin (27), Abijah Lincoln (27), John Newcomb (27), Samuel Godfrey (27), Joel Briggs (27), Nathan Babbit, 2d (27), William Cobb, jun. (26).¹

The war was "now actually begun," and active preparations are made for the defence of the Colonies. May 8, 1775, the citizens "voted to bye teen guns and Bagonets for the use of said Town." At the adjournment, May 22, —

"Voted to pay so many men as to make half the number of men in the Training-List, which are to be raised out of the Laram and Training Lists for minit men; and to be paid for the time they shall be necessarily Detained in service upon any Emergancy, as much as the said town shall think proper."

We propose to give the names of the Nortonians who served each year of the war, so far as we have been able to ascertain them; and we do no more than justice to their patriotism by such a record. The following is the return of Capt. Silas Cobb's company, made Oct. 6, 1775. The men were enlisted for eight months. We are uncertain whether those marked with a (*) were out the full eight months or not. Those unmarked are known to have served the whole time for which they enlisted.

Officers. — Silas Cobb, captain; Isaac Smith,* lieutenant; Isaac Fisher, ensign.

Sergeants. — Edmund Hodges, Nathaniel Lane, Jonathan Hodges, Nathaniel White.

Corporals. — Jonathan Franklin, Richard Cobb, Stephen Jennings.

Drum and Fife. — Abner Tucker,* Jabez Briggs.

Privates. — Joshua Atherton, Jacob Allen, John Austin, Stephen Briggs, Phineas Briggs, James Boldery, John Boldery, Isaac Basset, Benjamin Braman, Levi Babbit, Elisha Cobb, John Capron, Abiel (?) Derby, Abner Derby, Abijah Fisher, John Hodges, David Hodges, John Hodges, 2d,

¹ Alarm Roll, vol. xii. p. 111.

Lanson (?) Hodges, Isaac Harridon, Stephen Kelly, Abiel Lincoln, Rufus Lincoln, Amos Martin, Joseph Pratt, Daniel Pratt, Joshua Pond, Oliver Smith, Abiathar Smith, Seth Smith, Nathan Shaw, Jacob Shaw, Abiathar Shaw, Abel Wetherel, Noah Wiswall.

In the return of Capt. Masa Williams's company, of Easton, made Oct. 6, 1775 (eight months' service), I find the following men from Norton:—

Officers.—Samuel Lane,* lieutenant; John Cook, ensign; Samuel Copeland, sergeant; Benjamin Morey, corporal.

Privates.—James Newcomb, James Cook, Abiel Knapp, Robert Hagin, Edward Kingman, Amos Tucker, Moses Downing, Jedediah Tucker, Zepheniah Newland, Isaac Morey, Daniel Morey, William Merry, John Newcomb, Acors Hewitt.

Capt. Josiah King, of Norton, was also in the eight months' service in 1775. In his company were the following men from Norton:—

Thomas Bass,* Josiah King, Comfort Eddy, Josiah Smith, Benjamin Tucker.

There were also out in three different companies, in the eight months' service, the following persons from Norton:—

Peletiah Day, David Balcom, Jonathan Pidge, Israel Smith, Samuel Newcomb.

Elijah Eddy, of this town, was in Peter Pitt's company, of Dighton, three months and six days during this year; and Nathan Morey was chaplain of Timothy Walker's regiment.

"Sept. 18, 1775, voted to Eleazar Clap, which he paid for mending a gun for the town's use, £0. 3s. 6d.; also to the same, for carrying blankets to the army for said town's use, £0. 2s.; also to the same,¹ for thirty-two days' service at the Provincial Congress, £4. 4s. 4d.;

¹ Mr. Clap represented Norton and Mansfield in the first Provincial Congress.

also to Capt. William Homes,¹ for one hundred days' attendance at said Congress, £12. 18s."

In 1776, the Committee of Correspondence, Inspection, &c., were William Homes, Andrew Hodges, David Lincoln, John Hall, Noah Woodward, Eleazer Clap, and Israel Trow. The question, whether the Colonies should declare themselves independent of Great Britain, was agitated in Congress in the spring of 1776. It was thought best to feel the pulse of the community a little before proceeding to extreme measures.

The freeholders and other inhabitants of Norton were warned to assemble on the 24th of May,² among other things, "to know their minds whether they will, in conformity to a resolve of the late Honr. House of Representatives for this colony, advise their Representative, that, if the Honor. Continental Congress should, for the safety of the United Colonies, Declare them Independent of Great Britain, that they, the said Inhabitants, will solemnly engage, with their lives and fortunes, to support them in the measure." And it was "voted, if the Honor. Continental Congress should think proper to declare the United Colonies Independent of Great Britain, that they will support them with their lives and fortunes."

This was no unmeaning flourish of trumpets, as all will be abundantly satisfied when the whole transactions of the town relative to the war are recorded.

During 1776, the following men were from Norton, in the Rhode-Island service, in Capt. George Makepeace's company:—

Lieutenants. — Seth Smith, Ephraim Lane, jun.

Sergeants. — Daniel Knap, Daniel Dean, Hezekiah Willard, Abiel Eddy.

¹ Mr. Homes represented Norton and Mansfield in the second and third Provincial Congresses.

² Heretofore the warrants for town-meetings had been called "in his majestie's name;" but, in the call for the above meeting, this formula was omitted. The next meeting, held in September after the Declaration of Independence, was called in the "name and the government of the people of the state of the Massachusetts Bay."

Corporals. — Edward Darby, Timothy Briggs, Elisha Cobb, Abiel Lincoln.

Fife. — Abiathar Shaw.

Drum. — Jabez Briggs.

William Makepeace, John Briggs, John Patten, David Arnold, Ephraim Eddy, Oliver Smith, Ezra Eddy, John Gilbert, Benjamin Blandin, Jeremiah Cambell, Phineas Briggs, Jacob Shaw, John Clark, John Hall, Seth Gilbert, Timothy Smith, Isaac Smith, John Cook, Samuel Lane, Amasa Williams.¹

There also went from Norton to Rhode Island, in Capt. Isaac Hodges' company, —

Nathaniel Wood, sergeant; Rufus Hodges, John Derry, William Carpenter, Joseph Newcomb, Job White.²

Capt. Isaac Hodges also had the command of a company in the Tiverton Alarm. The names of his men (whether all from Norton is uncertain) were —

Lieut. Brian Hall; Jonathan Hodges, Amos Martin, Elkanah Lincoln, Benjamin Braman, John Wetherell, Josiah Braman, Sylvanus Braman, Thomas Braman, Silas Cobb, Abisha (?) Capron, Abraham Derry, Abijah Fisher, James Hodges, Jesse Hodges, Rufus Hodges, Nathaniel Hodges, Simeon Hodges, Philip Hore (?), Stephen Kelly, Samuel Lincoln, Josiah Willis, Timothy Wellman, Isaac Stone, William Stone, Daniel Phillips, Ichabod Perry, Benajah Tucker, Meletiah Washburn, Isaac Fisher.³

In a secret expedition from Sept. 25 to Oct. 31, Capt. Hodges was again on duty, with these men under his command, most of whom were from Norton : —

Nathaniel Prior, Elijah Danforth, Ebenezer Titus, Comfort Day, Abiel Eddy, James Fillebrown, John Clap, Samuel Fillebrown, James Newcomb, William Leonard, William Stone, Daniel Phillips, Sylvester Cobb, Abijah Fisher, Joseph Braman, Elias Eddy, Amasa Lincoln, Joseph Andrews, Alexander Balcom, Peter Derry, John Derry, Eliab Derby, John Hodges, George Hodges, Stephen Kelly, John Martin, Asa

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. iii. p. 7.

² Rhode-Island Revolutionary Rolls, vol. ii. p. 86.

³ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. xx. p. 59.

Newcomb, Elijah Eddy, Moses Fisher, George Briggs, Stephen Briggs, Abijah Lincoln, Abijah Wetherell, Simeon Briggs, Samuel Copeland, Josiah Vining, Solomon Wetherell, Nathaniel Wood, Ephraim Eddy, Ezra Willis, Samuel Pratt, David Lovit, Abijah White, Ammi Kimball, Daniel White, Asa Clap, Jonathan White, Jedediah Grover, Nathaniel Sweeting, Thomas Skinner, Zebulon Hodges, Nathaniel Hodges, Samuel White, Jonathan Lane, Benjamin Skinner, Joseph Titus, Stephen Pond, Isaac Skinner, Benjamin Blandin, William Axtell (?), Abisha Smith, Joshua Pond, Ichabod Willis, Benjamin Fuller, Levi Babbit, Ichabod Eddy, Jonathan Franklin, Silas Wellman, Royal White, Caleb Dunham, Nehemiah Leonard, Elisha Thayer, John Harden, Jesse Grover.¹

Dec. 8, 1776, Capt. Israel Trow marched to Rhode Island at the head of the following men, all from Norton : —

Lieutenants. — David Clap, Edward Babbit.

Sergeants. — Seth Williams, Samuel Hunt, Jacob Shepard, Benjamin Wild.

Corporals. — David Lincoln, John Newcomb, Jonathan Briggs.

Privates. — David Austin, Simeon Briggs, Eleazar Clap, Noah Clap, Asa Copeland, Abijah Lincoln, Joseph Hunt, Rufus Lincoln, Samuel Newcomb, Mase Shepard, Seth Tisdale, Reuben Tisdale, John Tisdale, Thomas Storey, Thomas Storey, jun., Solomon Wetherell.²

The Committee of Correspondence, &c., for 1777, were David Lincoln, Eleazar Clap, Israel Trow, Noah Wiswall, Record Franklin, Jonathan Clap, and Seth Gilbert. There were some in Norton, as in most of the towns in the Colonies, who espoused the cause of the British, and were known as Tories, or Loyalists. There were others, probably, who were uncertain how the contest would end, and therefore avoided taking any active part on either side; so that, in the end, they could easily join in with the victorious party. These last were truly but little better than the first:

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. xx. p. 93.

² Ibid. vol. iii. p. 186.

for, generally, those who did not openly espouse the cause of the colonists, secretly hoped that the oppressors would triumph; and were, therefore, really on their side. Hence it became necessary, for the security of the Colonies, that these pretended neutrals should be watched. Accordingly, June 23, 1777, Isaac Smith was chosen "to collect what evidence he can against such persons as have been or may be Inimical to this or the United States."

At the same meeting, Samuel Godfrey was declared to be inimical to the States. At an adjourned meeting one week later, said Godfrey was voted "not Inimical to the states."¹ It is presumed, however, that neither of these votes in the least changed the character of the man.

Sept. 8, 1777, the town "voted to George Cobb, for going to Milton for paper-cartridges, £0.—12s.—0d.; The cost of paper, £0.—18s.—10d.; For a box to stow the cartridges in, £0.—3s.—0d.; For two days himself, and three days and a half of Seth Smith and Joshua Pond, to make cartridges, £4.—2s.—d.; For thread for the cartridges, £0.—1s.—0d." Also "voted that the selectmen procure the town's proportion of arms allowed by the state, and that they should have the money to purchase said arms with." Sept. 15, "voted that ten of the fire-arms sent to this town should be kept as a store for said town."

In April and May of this year, Capt. Israel Trow had the command of the following men in the Rhode-

¹ I find no other person named on our records as unfriendly to the American cause. Among the neutrals was doubtless Judge Leonard. Though the most influential man in town, he took no active part in public affairs during the war. Among the most conspicuous of the Loyalists in this town was George Leonard, 3d, who lived at Barrowsville, and was a son of Rev. Nathaniel Leonard, and a brother of Daniel of Taunton, also a Loyalist. According to a writer in the Genealogical Register for October, 1858, p. 338, he joined the enemies of our country, and "was a colonel of a regiment; laid Nantucket under contribution; and attacked Fall River, where he was gallantly repulsed by Col. Joe Durfee. He eventually retired to Nova Scotia, where he became a provincial councillor, and renewed his fortune, which had been confiscated" in Massachusetts. He died at Sussex Vale in 1826, aged eighty-three.

Island service. Most of them were from Norton, but probably not all.

Lieutenants. — Isaac White and Jonathan Pratt.

Sergeants. — John White, Jacob Newland, Amos Martin, Thomas Eason.

Corporals. — Samuel Fillebrown, Jesse Hodges, John White, Asa Williams.

Drum. — Joel Briggs.

Fife. — John White, 3d.

Asa Clap, Abijah Clap, Asa Copeland, Eleazer Eddy, Nathan Finney, Thomas Gibbs, Benjamin Hodges, Thomas Bass, Masa Basset, Benjamin Cobb, jun., Mason Cobb, Josiah Crossman, William Dunham, Elias Eddy, Levi Francis, David Grover, Phillip Horr, Thomas Hewit, Zebulon Hodges, Bethuel Hack, Amasa Lincoln, Timothy Leonard, Nehemiah Leonard, Oliver Lincoln, Joel Martin, Benjamin Merrifield, Isaac Makepeace, Ebenezer Newcomb, Daniel Phillips, 2d, Ebenezer Richardson, Nathan Richard, Abisha Smith, Asa Smith, Nathaniel Sweeting, Benjamin Skinner, Jonathan Smith, Joseph Titus, Amos Shepardson, Benjamin Trow, Stephen Thayer, Ichabod White, John White, 2d, Job White, Isaac White, Samuel White, Royal White, Silas Williams, Jacob Williams, John Thayer.¹

From May 14 to July 6 of the same year, Capt. Trow was again in service, with these men under his command, most of them from Norton : —

Lieutenants. — Isaac White and Michael Sweet; Amos Martin, Amos Ide, Thomas Eason, Daniel Hewet, Joel Briggs, John White, Christopher French, Mason Cobb, Lamech Blandin, Thomas Bass, Isaac White, Noah Robinson, Masa Basset, David Balcom, Asa Clap, Abijah Clap, Asa Copeland, William Carpenter, David Cooper, Joseph Dagget, Eleazer Eddy, Nathan Finney, Thomas French, David Grover, Thomas Gibbs, Thomas Hewit, Thomas French, jun., Zebulon Hodges, Isaac Jackson, Amasa Lincoln, Timothy Leonard, Oliver Lincoln, Joel Martin, Ebenezer Newcomb, Henry Peck, Isaac Perry, Daniel Reed, Benjamin Richardson, Abisha Smith, George Stanley, Gideon Stanley, Ebenezer Tyler, Abel Titus, Zelotes Tyler, Noah Tiffany, Benjamin

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. iii. p. 181.

Trow, Ichabod Willis, Samuel White, Royal White, Jacob Williams, Job White, Jonathan Wilmarth, John White, Asa Williams, Oliver Wellman, Asa Smith.¹

Capt. George Makepeace had the command of a company in the Rhode-Island service this year. In it were, from Norton, —

Hezekiah Willard, Daniel Knap, William Makepeace, Edward Darby, Timothy Briggs, Simeon Wetherell, George Cobb, John Briggs, Phineas Briggs, John Clark, Abner Tucker, Seth Smith.²

In December, Capt. Silas Cobb had the command of a company. In it were these men, from Norton : —

John Allen, second lieutenant; Nathaniel White, Amos Martin, Abiel Lincoln, Benjamin Hodges, Jabez Briggs, Daniel Hodges, Samuel Norton, Elkanah Hall, George Harvey, Nathaniel Prior, Phillip Horr, Edmund Tucker, Josiah Smith, Masa Basset, Thomas Bass, John Hall, 2d, Paul Cook, Joel Martin, Jonathan Smith, William Makepeace, Rufus Lincoln, William Carpenter, Joseph Harridon, John Hall, Timothy Wellman, Jonathan Clark, Thomas Hewit, Ephraim Knap, Snellum Babbit.³

In 1777, the persons whose names are here recorded enlisted into the army for three years. All did not, however, serve the full time of their enlistment. The figures attached to the names show the number of months the individual was in service.

Benjamin Morey (36), William Merry (10),⁴ Cæsar Makepeace (32), Cæsar Morey (44), Jonathan Morey (5), Isaac Morey (10), Nathaniel Morey (36), Daniel Morey (15), Jedediah Tucker (33), Josiah Tucker (36), Jacob Allen (37),⁴ Jeremiah Cambell (36), Ezekiel Clap (3),⁵ John Capron (20), James Dorsey (?) (46), Francis Guillow, John Harridon (36), Josiah King (45), Josiah King (39).

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. iii. p. 184.

² Ibid. vol. iii. p. 137.

³ Ibid. vol. i. p. 140.

⁴ Deserted.

⁵ Died.

For 1778, the Committee of Correspondence, &c., were Jonathan Clap, David Arnold, Isaac Smith, John Hall, and Seth Gilbert.

March 9, 1778, "voted that the selectmen should procure powder-flints, lead, and gun-locks of the board [of] war."

May 11, "voted that the officers of the several companies should raise the men sent for by the General Court on the best terms they can; and, if they cannot procure them for thirty pounds granted by said Court, that the town will pay the overplus." The officers were further directed "to hire the money to procure said men with, if thirty pounds will not."

We give below the members of Capt. Israel Trow's company, draughted for three months' service in Rhode Island, commencing Jan. 1, 1778. The residences are not given. Most of them are known to have belonged to this town.

Lieutenants. — Ebenezer Brintnell, Ephraim Lane.

Sergeants. — Jonathan Newcomb, William Bonney, William Wetherell, Jonathan Briggs.

Corporals. — Theophilus Crossman, Joseph Spurr, Joel Briggs, William Verry.

Drum. — John Wetherell.

Privates. — Masa Basset, Thomas Bass, Samuel Bailey, John Bates, Obadiah Brintnell, Jonathan Clark, Ebenezer Cane, Banfield Capron, Caleb Dunham, Abraham Derry, Peter Derry, John Dunbar, Ichabod Eddy, Ezra Eddy, John Field, Israel Fisher, Calvin Fillebrown, William Hodges, Zebulon Hodges, John Hall, jun., William Lane, Ephraim Knap, Timothy Leonard, Paul Lincoln, Jonathan Meburen (?), Daniel Phillips, Ichabod Randall, Solomon Skinner, Enoch Story, Asa Smith, William Story, Benajah Tucker, Jesse Tupper, Stephen Thayer, Benjamin Trow, Ichabod Willis, Permer (?) Wood, John White, Timothy Wellman, Josiah Willis, Ezra Willis, Levi Woodward, Abiathar Shaw, Seth Tiffany.¹

The following men from Norton enlisted for one

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. iii. p. 182.

year, from Jan. 1, 1778, in Capt. Joseph Cole's company, of Bridgewater : —

Seth Smith, Asa Newcomb, Elkanah Hall, Ichabod Eddy, Levi Woodward, John Cobb, John White, Timothy Skinner, Elias Eddy, Simeon Wetherell, John Gilbert, Masa Basset.¹

In Capt. Isaac Hodges' company, engaged in Rhode-Island service, we find these names. Most of them were from this town.

David Keith, Isaac White, Lewis Sweeting, Nat Freeman, Alexander Keith, James Newcomb, John White, Eliab Darby, Edmund Macomber, Abiel White, Joel Briggs, Thomas Grover, Alexander Balcom, Thomas Braman, Samuel Bailey, Obadiah Brintnell, Stephen Briggs, Benjamin Braman, Levi Babbit, Rufus Clap, Abijah Clap, Asa Clap, William Clark, William Dunham, James Fillebrown, Asa Fillebrown, Cornelius Gibbs, George Hodges, Elijah Hodges, Abial Leonard, Isaac Lincoln, Isaac Lathrop, John Newland, Nathaniel Prior, Seth Pitts, John Patten, Phillip Pratt, Jesse Randall, Benjamin Shaw, Joshua Stearns, Eliphalet Sweeting, Robert Skinner, Mase Shepard, Asa Smith, William Stone, James Stone, Benjamin Tiffany, Seth Tisdale, William Verry, Peter Wellman, Royal White, Asa Wellman, Abijah Wetherell, Simeon White, Seth Williams, Benjamin Homes, Ebenezer Burt, Samuel Copeland, Stephen Cilley, Daniel Pratt.²

These men were draughted from Norton in 1778 for nine months' service : —

Thomas Jenkins, Peter Derry, David Hodges, Joshua Smith, Thomas Bass, Ephraim Knapp, London Morey (negro), rejected, William Axtell.

Ephraim Lane was a lieutenant-colonel in Col. Thomas Carpenter's regiment, Rhode-Island service, from July 24 to Sept. 9, 1778. He was also a lieutenant-colonel in Col. John Daggett's regiment in 1775, called out by the alarm at Lexington, 19th of April.

For 1779, the Committee of Correspondence, &c., were William Cobb, William Homes, Esq., Daniel

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. i. p. 109.

² Ibid. vol. xx. p. 57.

Dean, Noah Wiswall, Noah Woodward, Silas Cobb, and Eleazer Clap. June 22, "voted that the eight Continental men now called for for nine months, and the three men for the Lines at Rhode Island, be raised by way of a tax on the ratable polls and estates in sd. Norton;" and a committee were appointed to raise "the above men."

This committee were directed "to procure the above men upon the best terms they can, and lay their account before the town for their allowance and payment, and it should be allowed." Adjourned to July 5. Then "voted to raise on the ratable polls and estates three thousand pounds, for the purpose of raising men for the country's service."

Aug. 30, "voted to Silas Cobb two pounds, nineteen shillings, L. my., for keeping seven Highlanders one night, and finding them all a breakfast."¹

There was an article in the warrant for a town-meeting, Sept. 20, 1779, "to take under their consideration a letter from the town of Boston, with regard to the difficulties sd. town is now [laboring under] for want of supplies of the necessaries of life." Samuel Morey and Isaac Smith were chosen a committee "to collect sheep and grain for to carry to Boston, for the supply of sd. town of Boston." During this year, we find but few soldiers on duty from Norton. In the roll of Capt. Joseph Franklin's company, of Rehoboth, engaged in a four months' service in Rhode Island, in the autumn of 1779, we find a few names of men from this town, which we here record: —

Israel Fisher, Francis Guillow, Isaac Stone.²

¹ Rev. Isaac Braman, of Georgetown, recently deceased, wrote me, that, "when Burgoyne surrendered to the Americans, his army was scattered over the country in different towns. Twelve Scotch Highlanders were sent to Norton. They came to church, and sat together on the lower floor, dressed in short red coats; checked kilts, coming a little below the knee, stripes two inches wide; stockings of the same kind of cloth. Their appearance was novel and exciting. How long they continued in Norton, I cannot say." These were doubtless the men for whose lodging and breakfast Mr. Cobb was paid.

² Revolutionary Rolls, vol. ii. p. 51.

The years 1779 and 1780 were probably the saddest and darkest known during the whole war. The currency was in a very depreciated condition. To such an extent was it reduced, that, in 1780, fifty or sixty dollars of bills of credit were worth only about one dollar in specie. This state of things added very much to the difficulty of procuring recruits for the army, and of providing food and clothing for those already enlisted.

For 1780, the Committee of Correspondence, &c., were William Cobb, William Homes, and Daniel Dean. June 16, voted to raise such sums of money as shall be sufficient to pay the eighteen men, to be raised for the continental army for six months, by a tax on the ratable polls and estates; and a committee were appointed to raise said men. Then "voted that the committee procure the sd. 18 men upon the best terms they can, and lay their accounts before the town." It was probably found difficult to induce the men to enlist; and therefore, as an incentive, it was, June 23, "voted that those persons, who shall enlist voluntarily into the six months' service before four in the afternoon next Monday, shall be exempted from their poll-tax during their service." Adjourned to the Monday following (June 26); then "voted to give the men that shall engage in the six months' service twenty-four pounds, as a bounty; to be paid in Indian Corn, at 3s. per bushel; and Rye, at 4s. per bushel; and Bar Iron, at four dollars per hundred; or the same sum in Gold or silver paid down; and exempted from paying any poll-tax for six months to come, or during their service this campaign." Adjourned to last Wednesday of August. July 4, the town decided to raise the twenty-two men, called for from this town for three months, by a tax on the polls and estates; and offered, as a bounty to those who would enlist, "twelve pounds, to be paid in silver money." Afterwards voted "to pay the twelve pounds' bounty in Bar-Iron, Rye, Indian Corn," at the prices offered for the six months' men, and to "excuse them from their poll-tax in proportion

to the six months' men, according to their time of service." Also voted to give the four men now called for, in addition to the eight men called for (for six months) by a resolve of the General Court of June 5, 1780, "the same bounty as was given to the eighteen men." Chose a committee "to raise the 22 men for three months."

The full quota of men was not raised July 6. It was then ordered, that those men draughted and mustered shall be entitled to the same bounty as those that enlist.

Voted to raise five thousand pounds' tax forthwith, to pay for the horses purchased in this town.

On the last Wednesday of August, the bounty of twenty-four and twelve pounds had not charmed the full number of men desired into the ranks of the army; and hence, on that day, the town empowered the committee to go into any other town, where they can be insured that they have got their quota of six and three months' men, and hire the men now wanting for this town.

Oct. 9, the town "voted to raise £1,108.—5s.—0., in silver money, to pay the Bounty to the soldiers that were hired the summer past." Also "voted to Mr. Nathaniel Prior 210 pounds, old continental money, for going, himself and team, to Tiverton with the soldiers last August." The same day, "voted to choose a person to purchase the beef called for (by a Resolve of Gen. Court) from this town;" and Major Silas Cobb was chosen to make the purchase.

Oct. 16, it was "voted to raise £1,100.—0.—0. for to pay for the beef and trouble." Dec. 25, "voted to raise such a sum of money as to enable the town to pay each soldier that shall enlist into the continental service for three years, or during the war, three hundred silver dollars each; one hundred paid soon, one hundred paid in one year, and the other hundred in two years, with interest."

In the alarm of August, 1780, Capt. Israel Trow marched to Rhode Island at the head of a company of

men, whose names we here record ; all of whom are supposed to have belonged to this town : —

Joseph Hodges, first lieutenant ; Jacob Shepard, second lieutenant ; Benjamin Wild, Elkanah Lincoln, David Lincoln, Jonathan Newland, James Newcomb, Joshua Pond, Rufus Hodges, Joseph Andrews, Sylvanus Braman, Samuel (?) Blandin, George Briggs, Daniel Basset, Joseph Burt, Elijah Briggs, David Balcom, Noah Clap, John Clap, Jeremiah Cambell, Theophilus Crossman, Paul Cook, Tisdale Hodges, George Hodges, Elijah Hodges, Joseph Howard, Abijah Lincoln, Levi Lincoln, Seth Pitts, Thomas Story, Asa Smith, Araunah Smith, Zebulon White, Joel White, Abijah Wetherell, David Wetherell, Josiah Wellington, Elkanah Wilmarth, Abiathar Macomber, Amos Martin, Nathan Perry, Elijah Danforth, Samuel Hunt, Seth Williams, Eleazer Walker, Jacob Shaw, Nathaniel Freeman, Noah Woodward, Jesse Hodges, William Copeland, Samuel Copeland, Josiah Hodges, William Stone, William Norton, Jonathan Hodges, Peletiah Day, Joseph Wellman, Ichabod Perry, William Wetherell, Ebenezer Wetherell, Elisha Capron, Daniel Phillips, James Davis, Nathan Dean, Nathaniel Wood, Silas Cobb, John King.¹

Capt. Seth Smith commanded a company in the Rhode-Island service this year, probably all Nortons ; whose names were —

Ephraim Lane, lieutenant ; Hezekiah Willard, William Makepeace, Nathan Cobb, Daniel Knapp, Isaac Hodges, Edward Darby, George Cobb, Benjamin Stanley, John Hodges, Jabez Briggs, David Arnold, Phineas Briggs, Thomas Braman, Benjamin Blandin, Joseph Matthews, John Briggs, Isaac Basset, Nathan Dean, Ephraim Eddy, Ezra Eddy, John Hall, Zephaniah Hodges, Abiel Lincoln, Oliver Leonard, Calvin Morey, William Stone, Nat Stone, Seth Smith, Benajah Tucker, Benjamin Tiffany, William Verry, Simeon Wetherell, John Wetherell, David Woodward, Samuel Willis.²

Capt. John Allen was also absent six days with a company in Rhode-Island service. We give the names of those from this town : —

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. iii. p. 177.

² Ibid. vol. xxiii. p. 65.

Jacob Shepard, lieutenant; Isaac Hodges, Jonathan Briggs, Rufus Hodges, Nathan Dean, John Hodges, Joseph Andrews, John Arnold, David Balcom, Sylvanus Braman, Isaac Basset, Benjamin Blandin, William Carpenter, Paul Cook, Noah Clap, Ephraim Eddy, Elijah Eddy, Tisdale Francis, Zephaniah Hodges, Joseph Howard, Oliver Leonard, Levi Lincoln, William Newcomb, Solomon Newcomb, Josiah Newcomb, Nat Prior, Abisha Smith, Araunah Smith, Thomas Story, Samuel Stevens, John Tisdale, Jacob Tiffany, Elkanah Woodward, James White, James Wetherell, Simeon Wetherell.¹

In Capt. Jabez Barney's company of Swanzeey, at West Point, August, 1780, were the following men from this town. The first two served for the town of Mansfield; the remainder, for Swanzeey.

Isaac Morey, lieutenant; Levi Francis, jun., John Cambell, John Prior, Brian Hall, Vincent Cambell, Benjamin Holmes, John Martin.²

In the six months' service, in 1780, I find the following list of men from Norton, made up by the selectmen:—

Jedediah Tucker, Daniel Hodges, Ichabod Pitts, Jabez Newland, Isaac Stone, Vincent Cambell, Henry Howard, Samuel Willis, John Hall, Benjamin Holmes, Israel Smith, Daniel Hodges, 2d, Daniel Burr, Jonathan Hodges, Benjamin Fuller.³

The following is a list of the men raised in Norton, agreeably to a resolve of the General Court, passed Dec. 2, 1780; the term of service, three years:—

Samuel Sherman, Benjamin Fuller, Elisha Capron, Joshua Fuller, Timothy Tucker, Abiathar Macomber, Henry Hayward, Jacob Briggs, Samuel Eddy, Francis Guillow, Seymour Burr, Seth Capron, Benjamin Chotsey (?), Cuff Freeman, Jedediah Tucker, Ezra Hodges.⁴

Jan. 8, 1781, the town "voted so far to comply with the Resolve of the General Court Respecting

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. i. p. 7.

³ Ibid. vol. iv. p. 184.

² Ibid. vol. i. p. 51½.

⁴ Ibid. vol. xxiv. p. 418.

Beef as to procure sd. Beef, or the money ;” also voted to raise £204. 3s. 0d., silver money, in addition to the £1,108. 5s. raised Oct. 9, 1780,—to be devoted to the same purpose. The Committee of Correspondence, &c., for 1781, were Silas Cobb, Israel Trow, and Noah Wiswall.

March 5, “voted to give the men, called for to go to Rhode Island for forty days, four pounds and ten shillings per month, including whatever shall be given them from this commonwealth, or any other way from the publick.”

In the summer, the General Court called upon the town to supply the army with six thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight pounds of beef, twenty-eight shirts, twenty-eight pair of shoes and stockings, and fourteen blankets. July 16, it was “voted to comply with the requisition of the General Court respecting Beef ; and £120 silver money was raised to pay for it, and Capt. Ephraim Burr was authorized to purchase it at fourpence per pound :” and it was ordered, “that there be a clause inserted in the warrant for our fall meeting, to raise a sum of money to pay for clothing.” It was also “voted to give the men, that shall go into the three months’ service, twenty silver dollars per month, and the town to receive their wages from this commonwealth, and that each man have five dollars advance pay.”

We find but few names of soldiers to record for the year 1781. In January of this year, there were in the Continental army, from Norton, enlisted in the years 1777-79-80, for three years, or during the war,—

Josiah King, Cæsar Morey, Joseph Pratt, Lathrop Knapp, John Harridon, Josiah King, Anthony Morey, Jacob Allen, and William Wellman.¹

On the 19th of October, Lord Cornwallis and his whole army laid down their arms at Yorktown, Va.,

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, vol. xxix. p. 113.

as prisoners of war, to the combined forces of France and the United Colonies; which event was the virtual termination of the war, although the articles of peace were not formally signed till nearly two years afterwards.

The town-records are almost entirely silent relative to the war after the siege and surrender at Yorktown. At the March meeting in 1783, the selectmen were chosen "a committee of correspondence and Safety," &c.

March 1, 1784, the town "voted not to give the continental officers any extraordinary pay." Rev. Isaac Braman wrote me, that, "Towards the close of the Revolutionary war, a hen's egg was found about a mile south of the church, on which was written in raised letters, '*Piece to America.*' This was thought by the 'Hoi Polloi' to be a true prophecy,—that Peace was soon to take place. I was a little more than 12 years of age, but knew the difference between *Peace* and *Piece*, and was convinced that it was an imposition." And such, no doubt, it was. Here, then, we must bid adieu to the war, which forms the greatest era in our country's history.

We do not suppose we have recorded the names of all our citizens who served in defence of their country's rights. It is to be regretted that the names of all who were engaged in the war were not entered upon the town-books.

Had this been done, our list of Revolutionary patriots would no doubt have been much longer than it now is. Yet we would also remember, that the victory was not won by those alone who met the enemy face to face amidst the din of clashing arms, and the shrieks and groans of the wounded and dying. For those who remained at home, and who furnished the "sinews of war," and took care of the families of those absent; who, out of their poverty, furnished provisions and clothing for the army, and cheered them on through all their reverses, trials, and discouragements,—and among these we must reckon the mothers, wives, and

daughters of the soldiers,—we would not withhold the praise justly their due. We cannot, it is true, record their names; they stood not so prominently before the eye of the world: but their heroism was none the less real on that account; and we trust their patriotism and self-sacrifice will never be blotted from our country's remembrance.

Although the war released our fathers from the despotism of England, it left many of them under the despotism of irreligion and immorality. The whole nature of war is demoralizing in the extreme. In corroboration of this idea, we will quote a passage from Rev. Pitt Clarke's "Historical Sermon." Speaking with reference to the causes of waning morals among the people of Norton, he says,—

"The French war, and the revolutionary contest with Great Britain, produced great changes in the morals of the people, and, in particular, led to a greater disregard to the Sabbath, and public worship. War is not only the scourge of nations, but a very corrupting engine to the people. It breaks down the barriers of peace and order. Its bad effects are extensive and lasting, if they can ever be repaired. Its influence was great in corrupting the morals of this town as well as other places; in consequence of which, many of the past and present generations have lived in total neglect of the Sabbath, and sanctuary opportunities. We find but few instances of those, who were long in the army, returning to their homes with any regard to the Sabbath, or institutions of religion."

With this testimony against war, without the least desire to impugn the motives of the Revolutionary patriots, we close the chapter.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MILITARY HISTORY.

"Man is a military animal;
Glories in gunpowder, and loves parade."

P. J. BAILEY.

OF the early military history of the town, we can learn but little. About 1698, a military company was formed in the North Purchase, and that part of the old town of Taunton now included in Norton. George Leonard was the first captain, commissioned by Richard, Earl of Bellamont, Governor of the Province. It is believed that Samuel Brintnell was the first lieutenant; and Nicholas White, ensign. It will be remembered, that, in the precinct controversy, the "military line" was desired by the petitioners to be the southerly line of the precinct. This "military line," I suppose, was the bounds between the North-Purchase Company and the other company at Taunton Town. By a law of 1693, the following persons were exempted from military duty: viz., Councillors, Representatives, Secretary of the Province, Justices of the Peace; the President, Fellows, Students, and Servants of Harvard College; Masters of Art, Ministers, Elders, and Deacons; Sheriffs and their Deputies, Physicians, Schoolmasters, Coroners, Treasurers, Attorney-General, Clerk of Courts, Constables, Ferrymen, Millers, Officers of the Revenue, Masters of Vessels, Herdsmen, lame persons, Indians, and Negroes. For many years previous to the separation of Mansfield from Norton, there were three military companies in town, whose limits were as follows: The first company embraced all the territory of the South Precinct westerly of Rumford River. The second company was in the North Precinct (Mansfield); and the third company embraced all the South-Precinct ter-

ritory easterly of Rumford River.¹ I have found a list of these three companies for the year 1757 ; of which Major George Leonard, jun., had the command of the first ; Col. Ephraim Leonard, the second ; and Capt. Simeon Wetherell, the third. We regret that want of space compels us to omit these names. In the lists of town-officers which we have given in Chapter XX. will be found attached to their names the titles of most of the military officers previous to the Revolutionary war. I have been unable to find, except in one or two cases, the date of any military commissions previous to 1776. After the incorporation of Mansfield, the two infantry companies of Norton (one on each side of Rumford River) continued till about twenty years ago. In 1834, the military system of Massachusetts was revised, which gave the deathblow to all but the volunteer companies ; and hence we find no commissions issued to officers of the old infantry company after that time. The following persons were captains of the infantry company, on the west side of Rumford River, between 1781 and 1834. The date of their commissions, in parentheses, immediately follows their names.

Joseph Hodges (July 1, 1781) ; Ebenezer Titus (Aug. 4, 1789) ; Zebulon White (Aug. 20, 1792) ; William Morey (Sept. 25, 1797) ; Jonathan Hodges (March 26, 1798) ; Rufus Hodges (May 5, 1801) ; Seth Hodges (Dec. 3, 1804) ; Asa Arnold (March 23, 1807) ; Lemuel Arnold (Nov. 21, 1808) ; Sanforth Freeman (June 15, 1815) ; Alvin Perry (May 1, 1819) ; Ichabod Perry, jun. (June 26, 1821) ; Isaac Branan (May 30, 1822) ; Mason Stone (March 30, 1826) ; Almond Tucker (Oct. 25, 1828) ; Thomas Carpenter (May 14, 1832.)

We here give the names of the captains of the company, east of Rumford River, from 1781 to 1834 : —

¹ For many years, in taking the valuation of the town, the same division was observed, — George Leonard heading the list westerly of Rumford River ; Simeon Wetherell, that on the easterly side of said river ; and Ephraim Leonard, at the head of the North-Precinct list. We suppose they were placed first because they were considered the leading men in their part of the town.

David Clap (July 1, 1781); Reuben Tisdale (May 28, 1789); Isaac Makepeace (July 16, 1790); James Godfrey (Sept. 26, 1803); Lysander Makepeace (March 24, 1806); Asa Knowles (Feb. 15, 1808); Terry Crane (May 18, 1811); Jacob Shepard (May 17, 1812); Laban Lincoln (Aug. 9, 1819); Thomas Copeland (June 6, 1820); Lyman Eddy (May 6, 1824); Daniel Briggs, jun. (Aug. 26, 1826); Hennary Newcomb (April 30, 1830); George B. Crane (April 16, 1833).

In 1776, the Norton Artillery Company was organized, and George Makepeace was commissioned as captain. This company remained in Norton (a portion of its officers and members belonging to other towns) till 1854; when its name was changed to Light Infantry, and the company was removed to Foxborough. The two field-pieces in the possession of the company were returned to the State; and the Gun-house, near the Pound, was sold. At the time the name was changed, and the company removed to Foxborough, it was the oldest military company in the State.¹ The following are the names of its commanders (with the date of their commissions) who have belonged to Norton. A few captains, whose residence was in other towns, we have omitted from this list.

George Makepeace (Oct. 31, 1776); Ephraim Lane, jun. (1787); Daniel Knapp (March 26, 1790); Benjamin Blandin (Dec. 28, 1795); John Gilbert (May 7, 1799); Samuel Hunt (March 9, 1802); Thomas Danforth, 2d (Aug. 27, 1804); Elisha Crossman (June 14, 1810); Isaac Lane (May 14, 1812); David Lane (Aug. 22, 1814); George Walker (May 20, 1817); Lemuel Perry (Sept. 22, 1821); Calvin Lane (March 31, 1824); George Lane (Feb. 5, 1827); Simeon Blandin (March 8, 1828); Ira Richardson (April 16, 1833); Earl Hodges (Sept. 24, 1836); Carlos Freeman (April 9, 1836); Don F. Lane (July 4, 1839); Benjamin S. Hall (April 24, 1841); Luen C. Leonard (May 13, 1843); Carlos Freeman (May 24, 1844); Jacob

¹ Adjutant-General's Report, January, 1855, pp. 26, 27; where also may be seen a copy of a commission to Ephraim Lane, as second lieutenant of said company, dated Oct. 31, 1776.

T. Shepard (Aug. 30, 1851); Benjamin M. Round (April 27, 1853).

There was also, for some years, a horse company, a portion of whose members belonged to Norton; and the following Nortonians were captains of it:—

Tisdale Hodges (Dec. 16, 1793); Daniel Smith (May 24, 1810); Pliny Puffer (Aug. 22, 1823).

The following comprise a list of those from this town, who, since the Revolution, have risen above the post of captain, or held a commission of the same rank:—

Brigadier-General.—Silas Cobb (Aug. 2, 1792).

Colonels.—Silas Cobb (May 26, 1788); Isaac Braman (Sept. 9, 1826); Mason Stone (Nov. 3, 1832).

Lieutenant-Colonel.—Simeon Wheeler (Jan. 14, 1819).

Majors.—Thomas Fobes (Sept. 26, 1794); Zebulon White (Aug. 1, 1803); Brian Hall (April 20, 1797); Isaac Braman (Oct. 1, 1825); Earl Hodges (July 10, 1844).¹

Adjutants.—Isaac Morey (Oct. 2, 1788); Ephraim Raymond (June 14, 1791); George Palmer (Aug. 30, 1797); William Lane (May 7, 1799); Thomas W. T. Bicknell (Oct. 4, 1812); Ephraim A. Raymond (April 23, 1829); John B. Newcomb (March 30, 1833).

WAR OF 1812.

We find but little to record relative to the war of 1812–15. From the following votes, we infer that the war was not very popular in Norton. Aug. 24, 1812, the town met, in obedience to a petition of Silas Cobb and others, to consider whether a continuance of the war was necessary, &c.

“Voted, that a continuance [of the] war was not necessary nor expedient under existing circumstances.”
—“Voted, that an alliance with France is not desirable. Chose three delegates to attend a County Convention to consult together for the common good,” &c.

The latter part of June, 1814, the Norton Artillery

¹ He did not accept the commission.

Company, Isaac Lane, captain, were called out to guard New Bedford. They were absent about twelve days. In August of the same year, one-half of the Artillery Company were draughted to go to Fairhaven; and the other half went to Boston, and were absent about six weeks. A portion of the infantry companies were also draughted into service about the same time.

Nov. 7, 1814, a meeting was held "to take into consideration the petition of Benjamin Horton and others, to see if the said town can or will fully compensate those that have been or shall be called into the service of our country this season or year."

At the meeting, "Voted to choose a committee of five persons to take into consideration the above-named petition, and report at this meeting."

The committee reported "that they think it expedient for the town to make up the wages of each non-commissioned officer and private soldier to fifteen dollars per month, including government's pay." This report was accepted.

The following persons from Norton were called into service during the war; viz.,—

Isaac Lane, David Lane, Lemuel Perry, Asa Danforth, Samuel Hunt, George Walker, Josiah Hodges, Allen Lane, Calvin Lane, Samuel Copeland, Enos Dean, Ebenezer Burt, Thomas Sweet, George Wetherell, Ebenezer M. Lincoln, Daniel Morey, Stillman Smith, Newton Sweet, Henry B. Dyer, Thomas Braman, jun., Ezra Macomber, Moses Hunt, John Harris, Noah Cooper, Eliab Thompson, Samuel Hunt, 2d, Joel Wilbur, Jonathan Knowles, Elijah White, John T. Whiting, Joseph Fuller, Simeon Dean, Allen Derry, Alfred French, Amherst Guild, Asa Patten, Spencer Morse, James Wiswall, Henry B. Hodges, Abijah Dean, John Gilbert, Stephen Hodges, Daniel Guillow, John Penno, Peleg West, Williams Keith, Sylvanus B. Braman, Andrews Braman, Perry Atherton, Sylvester Round, John Russell, Levi Bowen, Nathaniel Danforth, Ichabod Perry, jun., Seabury Woodward, Horatio Field, Kingman Richmond, Reuben Wilbur, John Wild, jun., Jesse Blandin, Elijah Eddy, Barnard Dean, Lyman Eddy, Solomon Lothrop, jun., Benjamin Blandin, jun.,

Josiah Wilbur, Abiathar Knapp, Tisdale Lincoln, George Hodges, jun., Charles Danforth, Leonard Hill, jun., William Lane, jun., Adoniram Hodges, Elisha Crossman, Nathan Dean, jun., William Dean, Gulliver Dean, Albert W. Godfrey, Solomon Leonard, Jedediah Packard, Daniel Lane, Asaph White, Philip Andrews, William Sweet, Zelotes Wetherell, Lawrence Hunt, Oliver Hunt, George Lane, John Freeman, jun., Zopher Skinner, David Godfrey, Alanson Cobb, Ephraim French, Augustus White.

POWDER AND AMMUNITION.

In "An Act for regulating of the Militia," passed by the General Court in 1693, it was ordered, "that there be a Stock of Powder and Ammunition in each town provided, and from time to time, as there is need be, renewed by the selectmen." The stock was to consist of a barrel of good powder, two hundred pounds of bullets, and three hundred flints, for every sixty enlisted soldiers, and in that proportion, whether more or less. The penalty for neglecting to have such an amount on hand on the 1st of May each year was "five Pounds." The selectmen were empowered to make a rate to purchase the ammunition, &c.

I do not find any action of the town relative to the matter till Oct. 2, 1722, when it was "voted that Joseph Pratt, Treasurer, shall Recover all the money that is dew to the towne for stray creters that have bin taken up, and deliver it to the selectmen for to Gitt a towne Stock of Powder and aminition with; and sd. Pratt shall be Paid out of sd. money for his Reasonabell charges."

May 13, 1723, at a meeting "warned to Provide a Towne Stock of amenition," it was "voted that they would Refer the Gitting of a stock of amenition till the Representative should Go to Boston, that he might send word what the minds of ye Court ware consarning the Precent; Baring a Part of Gitting sd. amenition, and to have a meeting before July Court again." We do not find, however, that they had "a meeting before July Court;" but, on the 1st of November following,

a vote is passed, "that the Interest money that is dew to the towne of Norton and sd. North Purchase, for this Presant year, shall be Laid out to Gitt a towne Stock of Powder and ammenicion for sd. towne and North Purchase."

Sept. 1, 1740, "Voated for to provide a towne Stock of amanition, the sum of £50—00—00." This lasted, we suppose, till May 17, 1744; when, probably, the news of war with France had reached the Colony, and an extra amount of ammunition was deemed necessary. Hence the town "voted to raise one hundred pounds, old Tenor, to be laid out for a towne stock of Powder ammunion, and charges of Giting it." This, we suppose, was used up during the year; and therefore, Sept. 23, 1745, £110 were appropriated "to purchase a towne stock of ammunion." The prospect of another war with France, in 1754, caused the town to again look to their powder-box, and pick their flints preparatory to the contest. Accordingly, Oct. 14 of that year, they voted "that the money which the General Court hath ordered to be paid to the selectmen out of the province Treasury be to provide for a town stock of Amunion, so much as is now wanting to be sufficient according to law, provided that Capt. William Stone do not procure the same."

In the summer of 1770, a division of "the town stock of ammunion, as powder, bullets, and flints," was made by a committee of Norton and the district of Mansfield; but the amount on hand was not stated.

"Feb. 19, 1787, voted that the selectmen be requested to make inquiry into the state of the ammunion in this town, and make report at the next March meeting."

"March 12, voted that the selectmen be directed to call on those persons, who have had any of the Town stock, to replace it immediately."

This was during the troubles caused by what is known as "Shay's Rebellion." For many years, the town's stock of powder and ammunion was kept in the garret of the old meeting-house. This was con-

sidered rather an unsuitable place ; and hence the erection of a building to deposit all the military stores in was a question before the town at a meeting, April 2, 1804 ; but it was " voted not to build a powder-house."

The next year, the matter was revived with better success ; for, June 12, 1805, it was " voted to build a Powder-house of brick and lime, and to set up the building of said house at vendue." By whom it was erected, we are not informed ; but the little circular brick building, about six feet in diameter, and as many high, with a conical roof of wood, now standing back of the Trinitarian Meeting-house, and nearly in front of William A. West's house, was soon after built in obedience to the above vote ; where, for many years, the town have kept their ammunition and other military stores.

" May 11, 1818, voted to furnish each infantry soldier with twenty-four cartridges with balls, to be kept in the town's store."

The powder-house now contains one old rusty flint-lock musket and bayonet ; about two kegs of ball-cartridges, so completely saturated with water and petrified that it is doubtful whether they would burn in any common fire ; a half-bushel of bullets, a peck of flints, three old tin pails, a few broken boxes, and almost hoopless powder-kegs. May it never contain more ! *Peacefully* may it go to ruins, with none to weep over its mouldering remains !

The old Common, near Sanforth Freeman's, was the scene of frequent regimental musters and military parades, with all their accompaniments of drunkenness, gambling, and fighting. But the progress of Christianity has almost entirely removed from our State these relics of a barbarous age ; and, so far as our town is concerned, all that remains of the military grandeur of former ages (aside from the powder-house) are a few broken muskets, rusty swords, beltless cartridge-boxes, tattered knapsacks, and mouldy commissions, preserved as mementoes of a bygone age.

CHAPTER XXX.

FEDERAL AND STATE CONSTITUTIONS.

“What constitutes a state?
Men, — high-minded men;
Men who their duties know;
But know their rights, and, knowing, dare maintain.”

WM. JONES.

THE Declaration of Independence formed no bond of union among the several Colonies. Hence the attention of the Continental Congress was soon called to the necessity of such a confederation, or union. Dr. Franklin, in 1775, submitted to Congress articles of confederation. But most of the members were probably then unprepared for such a movement. In the spring of 1776, this subject was again before Congress; and a committee of twelve — one from each State, except New Jersey — took the matter into consideration, and, the next week after independence was declared, reported a series of articles. It was found difficult, however, to harmonize all the conflicting opinions of the Colonies.

In the spring of 1777, Congress again turned its attention to this matter; and, on the 15th of November of the same year, the articles of confederation were adopted, — giving to the Colonies the name of THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

There was an article in the warrant for town-meeting, Jan. 1, 1778, “to take under consideration the articles of confederation and perpetual union proposed by the Congress.”

At the meeting, the town “voted to choose a Committee, to take the confederation of Congress into consideration, and report.” Chose William Holmes, Abraham White, Seth Gilbert, Nathan Hodges, Brian Hall, Eleazer Clap, William Cobb, Noah Woodward,

John Patten, David Arnold, George Leonard, jun., Jonathan Clap, and David Lincoln, for said committee.

Adjourned to 12th inst. Then "voted to Except of the Report of the aforesaid committee with regard to the confederation of Congress." — "Voted, that a copy of said Report should be given to the Representatives."

No record of this report was made on the town-books, and I have been unable to find a copy of it.

These articles of confederation did not authorize Congress to pass general laws or to impose taxes: they served only a temporary purpose, and that inadequately. In carrying on the war, Congress had incurred a heavy debt; but, having no power to raise money, could not pay it. This inability led to serious difficulties. At length, however, the convietion became general, that a remedy for these troubles must be found in amending the articles of confederation, or the formation of a new compact, or bond of union, between the States.

A convention of delegates from all the States, except Rhode Island, met at Philadelphia in 1787, and, having decided not to revise and amend the articles of confederation, proceeded to the formation of a Federal Constitution; and, after some months of deliberation, a constitution was adopted, and submitted to the several States for ratification.

Nov. 26, 1787, the town "did elect Mr. Abraham White to represent them in a state Convention to be holden at Boston on the second Wednesday of January next, for the purpose of taking under consideration the Federal Constitution."

The constitution was ratified by the convention at Boston, Feb. 6, 1778, by a majority of nineteen in a vote of three hundred and fifty-five. Mr. White, from Norton, voted against its ratification; but, immediately after the vote was declared, he is reported to have said, "that notwithstanding he had opposed the adoption of the constitution, upon the idea that it

would endanger the liberties of his country, yet, as a majority had seen fit to adopt it, he should use his utmost exertions to induce his constituents to live in peace under and cheerfully submit to it.”¹ This seemed to be the general spirit of the opposition.

STATE CONSTITUTION.

Immediately after the Declaration of Independence, the Massachusetts Assembly began to devise means for the formation of a constitution, and the adoption of a state form of government; and, accordingly, a resolve looking to this end was passed by them in September, 1776, and sent to the people.

On the 7th of October of that year, a meeting of the inhabitants of Norton was held —

“To take under consideration a resolve of the Honorable House of Representatives of this state with regard to a form of government; and to consider and determin whether they will give their consent that the present House [of Representatives], together with the Honorable Council of this State, in one body and equal voice, should consult, agree on, and enact, such a Constitution and form of Government for this state as the said House and Council, joined as aforesaid, shall judge will most conduce to the safety, peace, and happiness of this state; and whether, if any form of Government should be agreed on, that this town would desire that such form should be made publick for their inspection before it is ratified by said assembly; and to act in all respects with regard to said Resolve as they shall think fitt.”

At this meeting, William Homes, Eleazer Clap, William Cobb, Brian Hall, Nathan Hodges, David Arnold, Jonathan Clap, David Lincoln, Seth Gilbert, George Makepeace, and Henry Wetherell, jun., were chosen a committee to consider and make report upon the matter. The meeting was adjourned once and again to Oct. 22; when the committee make the following report, which was accepted:—

¹ See account of the ratification, &c., in *Genealogical Register* for July, 1847.

“The freeholders and other inhabitants of the Town of Norton, legally warned and in Town-meeting assembled, taking under their consideration a late Resolve of the present Honor. House of Representatives of this state respecting their consent that said House, with the Honor. Council, should agree on and enact a form of government for said state, came into the following votes; viz.,—

“1stly, That the establishing a good form of government is absolutely necessary, in order to lay a foundation for the future safety, happiness, and welfare of a people.

“2ndly, That as the end of government is the good of the people, so the power and right of forming and establishing a plan thereof is essentially in them.

“3dly, That, as this state is at present without a form of Government, it is highly necessary that one should soon be formed.

“4thly, That we cannot give our consent to the proposals of the said Honor. [House] in their resolve of the 17th of September last, that the present Honor. House, with the Honor. Council, should enact a form of government for this state; for these reasons, viz.: 1stly, That the present House and Council were not separately elected by the people for that special purpose, which we think it highly reasonable they should be in a matter of such importance; 2dly, The requisition of the Honor. House being so pregnant with power, we cannot think it will be conducive to the future good of this people to comply with their proposal.

“5thly, That we humbly conceive, that if the present general Assembly in a convenient time should be dissolved, and a state Convention called and convened for this important purpose, it might conduce much to the peace and quiet of the people of this state; and, we hope, would be a salutary measure to obtain the end proposed.

“6thly, That we think it would be very conducive to said end, with regard to a form of government, if each county should meet by their delegates, and consult with regard to what form of Government they may think it would be best for this state to come into; and, when they have so done, to lay the result of their several meetings before the proposed General Convention, that they may better collect the minds of the people, and select from the whole such a form of Government as shall by them be thought most likely to terminate in the safety, peace, and happiness of the people.

"7thly, That it appears to us absolutely necessary, for the liberty and safety of this state, that the plan of government, when formed, should be published for the perusal of the people, and not established without their approbation.

"8thly, Voted, that a copy of these Resolves be sent to the Secretary's office of this state, attested by the Town Clerk."

May 5, 1777, the Massachusetts Assembly "recommended to the people to choose their representatives to the next General Court, with full powers, in one body with the Council, to form such a constitution of Government as they shall judge best calculated to promote the happiness of this state;" to be subject to the approval of a two-thirds vote of the people.

At the session of June, 1777, a committee of twelve was charged with this subject. In January, 1778, this committee reported a draught of a constitution, which was adopted by the General Court, Feb. 28, 1778.¹

In the spring of 1778, this draught of the state constitution was submitted to the people for their acceptance. It was, however, so objectionable, that most of the towns in the State voted against it; and it was accordingly rejected.

At a meeting on the 22d of May, held by adjournment from May 11, the town of Norton "voted NOT to receive the form of Government agreed on by the Convention or general Court of this state; 8 for it, and 102 against it."

Feb. 20, 1779, the General Court, by a resolve, directed the selectmen of towns to obtain a vote from the people upon two questions, — whether they wished for a new constitution or form of government; and, in case they did, whether they would empower their representatives for the coming year to vote for a "State Convention for the sole purpose of forming a new Constitution." The people said "Yes" to both these propositions.

¹ See printed Journal of Convention, 1820, p. 6, Note.

In the warrant for a town-meeting, May 19, 1779, there was an article to see "whether they choose at this time to have a new Constitution, or form of Government, made." On this article, "voted in the negative." Then reconsidered the vote, and chose a committee "to give the representatives instructions;" and adjourned to May 26. Then met, and "voted for a new constitution, and form of government. at this time, 34 for it, and one against it."

"Voted to accept of the instructions of the Committee to the Representative." They are as follows: —

"NORTON, May 26th, 1779.

"To Mr. Abraham White.

"SIR, — As the town of Norton have made choice of you to represent them in the General Court at this critical and perplexed day, so they confide in your wisdom and integrity to conduct that arduous task in general so as you shall judge will best promote the interests of sd. town, and this and the other United States of America. Yet, as it must be agreeable to you to know the minds of your constituents in all matters of importance, we think fit to give you the following instructions; viz.: That you use your influence, that, as soon as conveniently may be, a new form of Government may be made.

"Secondly, that there be [permission granted] from the General Court to the several towns and districts in this state, for said towns and districts to delegate such person or persons as they shall think fit to convene for the Express purpose (and for that only) of forming a constitution for this state; and, Thirdly, that whatever the constitution may be that may be agreed on by said Convention, that you use your utmost influence that it shall not be established before it is laid before the several towns for their approbation, and that at least two-thirds of the voters on this occasion (collectively) approve of the said Constitution. These matters, with others that may come before the General Court, we trust to your firmness; reserving to ourselves the liberty of further instructions as occasion may require.

"By order of the Town.

"SILAS COBB, Town Clerk."

How faithfully Mr. White obeyed the instructions of the town, or how much influence he exerted in the

General Court towards bringing about results so nearly akin to the ideas embodied in the instructions, we have no means of knowing; but certain we are that a convention of delegates from the several towns was ordered to assemble at Cambridge on the first day of September, 1779, "for the sole purpose of forming a new Constitution, or form of Government."

Aug. 16, Mr. Abraham White was chosen a delegate from Norton to the proposed convention.

The convention assembled at the time and place appointed, and was continued by adjournments till March 2, 1780, when the draught for a Constitution was submitted to the people. It was adopted by a two-thirds vote of the State, previous to June, 1780; and, with the amendments since adopted, it is now the one under which we live.¹ The town of Norton met to consider the new constitution, May 8, 1780, and attended to the reading of it. It was objectionable in some particulars. They chose a committee "to take sd. constitution into consideration, and report."

Adjourned to May 25. Then met, and heard the report of the above committee, their objections and amendments; and it was "voted that the constitution, as it stands, should not be accepted unanimously, by 78 votes."

Then adjourned to June 1. At that time, it was "voted unanimously (108 voters present), that every article in the Declaration of Rights (except the fourth and twenty-second) and new form of Government should be accepted, that have not any objection or amendment made thereon by the committee." — "Declaration of Rights, Art. 3rd, voted with the amendment made by the committee, 72 for it, and 36 against it." — "Art. ye 4th, voted 51 for it, and 24 against it." — "Art. ye 22nd, voted 107 for it, and 1 against it." — "Voted, that the remaining part of the articles, with their amendments, be read, and voted upon all toge-

¹ The first Legislature under the new Constitution assembled at Boston, Oct. 25, 1780.

ther; and voted to accept of them all, with their amendments and objections; 103 voters for them, and 5 against them."

What were the particular objections to the several articles in the constitution does not appear, and probably will never be revealed.¹

The question of the revision of the State Constitution was submitted to the people in the spring of 1795. A majority of the voters in the State were opposed to a revision. In this town, the vote was taken May 6; and "43 voted for a revision of the Constitution, and 3 against." On the 21st of August, 1820, the town voted by ballot on this question, "Is it expedient that delegates should be chosen to meet in convention for the purpose of revising or altering the constitution of government of this commonwealth?" and there were 90 yeas and 11 nays.

The requisite majority of voters in the State having been given in favor of a Constitutional Convention, delegates from the several towns were chosen. Those from Norton were George Walker and Seth Hodges. The convention met at Boston, Nov. 15, 1820. They were in session till Jan. 9, 1821, and submitted fourteen articles of amendments to the people for their acceptance. April 9, 1821, the town vote upon these several articles of amendment as follows:—

ART. I. related to the public worship of God, the support of religious teachers, and to persons accused of criminal offences. Yeas, 5; nays, 104.

ART. II. changed the commencement of the political year from the last Wednesday of May to the first Wednesday of January; and provided for the choice of State officers in November, instead of April. Yeas, 3; nays, 126.

ART. III. established the veto power of the Governor, &c. Yeas, 5; nays, 107.

¹ At a meeting held the second Monday in May, 1781, "voted to Mr. Abraham White fifty old continental Dollars per day for forty-nine days that he attended at the State Convention held for forming a new Constitution."

ART. IV. empowered the General Court to grant a city government to towns having twelve thousand inhabitants. Yeas, 0; nays, 123.

ART. V. districted the State for the choice of thirty-six senators, instead of forty; provided for the election of representatives from the several towns; and required seven councillors to be chosen by the Legislature "from among the people at large," instead of nine. Yeas, 0; nays, 147.

ART. VI. related to the qualification of voters. Yeas, 15; nays, 87.

ART. VII. related to the appointment of notaries public, secretary, treasurer, and commissary-general, and to the removal of military officers. Yeas, 0; nays, 105.

ART. VIII. had reference to voters for military officers. Yeas, 35; nays, 46.

ART. IX. related to the removal, by address of the Legislature, of justices of the peace and other judicial officers; and forbade the Governor and Legislature to ask the opinion of the Supreme-Court judges upon certain questions. Yeas, 1; nays, 101.

ART. X. confirmed the rights and privileges, &c., of the President and Fellows of Harvard College, and regulated the choice of clerical overseers. Yeas, 2; nays, 89.

ART. XI. related to the oath of allegiance, and gave Quakers the privilege of affirming. Yeas, 27; nays, 53.

ART. XII. declared that no oath but that prescribed by the preceding article should be required of the Governor and other State officers. Yeas, 5; nays, 71.

ART. XIII. declared that a member of Congress should not hold at the same time certain judicial, state, and county offices, &c. Yeas, 27; nays, 38.

ART. XIV. prescribed the mode of making future amendments to the Constitution. Yeas, 4; nays, 79.

It will be seen that every article of amendment was rejected by the town, and most of them by a very decisive vote. The first, second, fifth, ninth, and tenth of these articles of amendment were rejected by the people; the others were adopted by the requisite ma-

majority of votes in the State, and constitute the first nine amendments to the Constitution of 1780.

The tenth article of amendment was passed by the Legislatures of 1829-30 and 1830-1; and was approved by the people, May 11, 1831. It changed the commencement of the political year from the last Wednesday of May to the first Wednesday of January; and also required the Governor and Legislature to be chosen on the second Monday of November each year, instead of in the spring, as had long been the custom.

On this amendment, the vote of Norton stood, — yeas, 28; nays, 79.

The eleventh article of amendment was adopted by the Legislatures of 1832 and 1833; and was approved by the people, Nov. 11, 1833. This was a modification of the third article of the Bill of Rights, establishing religious freedom.

The vote of Norton upon it was 33 yeas and 6 nays.

The twelfth article of amendment was adopted by the Legislatures of 1835 and 1836; and was approved by the people, Nov. 14, 1836. It related to the apportionment of representatives to the General Court.

The vote of Norton upon it was, — yeas, 66; nays, 6.

The thirteenth article of amendment was adopted by the Legislatures of 1839 and 1840; and was approved by the people, April 6, 1840. It related to the apportionment of senators and representatives to the General Court, and the choice of councillors from the people at large.

The vote of Norton upon it was, — yeas, 77; nays, 4.

By order of the Legislature for that year, the people of the State voted, Nov. 10, 1851, for and against a Convention to alter the State Constitution.

The vote in Norton for a Convention was 165; against it, 105. The project was rejected by the people of the State. A similar proposition was submitted to the people, Nov. 8, 1852. In this town, the vote stood, in favor of a Convention, 159; against it, 107: and there were a majority of voters in the State in favor of a Constitutional Convention. March 7, 1853, George B. Crane was elected a delegate to this Convention, which met at Boston on the first Wednesday of May, 1853, and continued in session till the 1st of

August following. The Convention submitted for the approval of the people eight "Constitutional Propositions." The vote was taken Nov. 14, 1853.

PROP. No. 1 embraced the old Constitution, modified in some respect; and contained the *Preamble, Declaration of Rights, and Form of Government.*

In this town, the vote was as follows: Yeas, 156; nays, 116.

PROP. No. 2 granted the writ of *habeas corpus*, "as of right, in all cases in which a discretion is not especially conferred upon the Court by the Legislature." Yeas, 160; nays, 115.

PROP. No. 3 gave juries in criminal cases "the right, in their verdict of guilty or not guilty, to determine the law, and the facts of the case." Yeas, 159; nays, 116.

PROP. No. 4 affirmed that every person, having a claim against the Commonwealth, ought to have a judicial remedy therefor. Yeas, 160; nays, 115.

PROP. No. 5 declared that "no person shall be imprisoned for any debt hereafter contracted." Yeas, 158; nays, 115.

PROP. No. 6 forbade the public-school moneys to be used for the support of sectarian schools. Yeas, 158; nays, 116.

PROP. No. 7 forbade the Legislature creating corporations by special Act, "when the object of the incorporation is attainable by general laws." Yeas, 159; nays, 114.

PROP. No. 8 took from the Legislature the power to grant "any special charter for banking purposes, or to increase the capital stock of any chartered bank;" but such corporations were to be formed "under general laws." Yeas, 159; nays, 114.

All these several propositions were rejected by a majority of the voters in the State. The vote for and against them was almost strictly a party vote; the Democrats and Free Soilers generally voting for, the Whigs and Catholics against, the proposition. The foreign vote, contrary to custom, was thrown on the Whig side. The proposition against sectarian schools is supposed to have caused the Catholics, generally, to oppose all the propositions.

Six amendments to the Constitution, having been adopted by the Legislatures of 1854 and 1855, were

submitted to the people for their approbation, May 23, 1855; and all of them were approved by a majority of the voters in the State voting thereon.

ART. I. of these amendments declared, that, in all elections of civil officers, the person having a plurality of votes should be "deemed and declared elected." On this the vote in Norton was,—yeas, 19; nays, 40.

ART. II. changed the time of choosing the Governor and State Legislature, from the second Monday to "the Tuesday next after the first Monday of November." Yeas, 52; nays, 7.

ART. III. required the State to be divided into eight Councillor Districts, and the councillors to be chosen by the people, instead of the Legislature as heretofore. Yeas, 45; nays, 15.

ART. IV. required the Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, and Attorney-General, to be chosen annually by the people. Yeas, 44; nays, 16.

ART. V. forbade the public-school moneys to be used for the support of sectarian schools. Yeas, 54; nays, 6.

ART. VI. related to the election of Sheriffs, Registers of Probate, Commissioners of Insolvency, Clerks of the Courts, and District Attorneys, by the people. Yeas, 44; nays, 16.

Most of these propositions were nearly identical with some of those proposed by the Convention of 1853, and that year rejected by the people.

The following amendments to the Constitution passed the Legislatures of 1856 and 1857; and were submitted to the people, May 1, 1857. The vote in Norton, upon these amendments, stood thus:—

ART. I. requiring each voter to be able to read the Constitution in the English language, and to write his name. Yeas, 38; nays, 56.

ART. II. providing for the districting of the State for the choice of two hundred and forty Representatives to the General Court. Yeas, 41; nays, 52.

ART. III. requiring the State to be divided into forty single Districts, for the choice of State Senators. Yeas, 44; nays, 49.

All the amendments were adopted by a majority of the votes cast in the State.

CHAPTER XXXI.

EAST AND NORTH PRECINCTS.

“They went out from us.” — JOHN.

It will be recollected, that in the Bill creating the North Precinct of Taunton, and also in the Act incorporating the town of Norton, there was a proviso, that the east end of the North Purchase should have a precinct by themselves, whenever the court should judge them able to support a minister. I am indebted to Ellis Ames, Esq., of Canton, for the following documents relating to the East Precinct: —

“Oct. 30, 1717, a petition of the Inhabitants of the Easterly part of Taunton North Purchase, shewing that, whereas the Honble. Court, when they granted the North Precinct in Taunton to be a town by the name of Norton, made this proviso, — that the East end of the North Purchase shall have half of the said Purchase as their precinct, when they are able to maintain a minister, and this Court judged them so; and that, since the passing of that order of the General Assembly (which was in March 17, 1710–11), the number of the settled families in the said East end of Taunton North Purchase is much increased, and their settlements are too remote from any place where the public worship is carried on to travel comfortably to any such place, — they now judge themselves in a capacity to support a minister themselves.

“Therefore, praying that a committee be appointed between them and the town of Norton, that they may know their bounds of the half-part of the North Purchase, and that this Hon. Court would grant them to be a distinct Precinct or Township, as they shall in their wisdom think fit. And the petition was on that day read in Council, and sent down to the House of Representatives.”

“In the House of Representatives, November 11. — Read, and Ordered that the said East end of Norton be made as a

precinct, and have the powers and privileges granted by law to precincts; and that John Field, Ephraim Howard, and John White, surveyor, be a committee to run and settle a divisional line, by which it is to be set off from the other part of Norton,—pursuant to an order of the Court, March 17, 1710–11,—and make report to this Court.

“Sent up for Concurrence.

“In Council.—Read and Concurred.

“Consented to.

“SAML. SHUTE.”

On June 5, 1718, the report of the above-named committee, marking out the bounds, came in, and was confirmed, establishing the bounds of the East Precinct. Also, on June 5, 1718, an order was passed, on the petition of several of the inhabitants of the East Precinct of Norton, praying that a committee be appointed by the General Court to find out the centre of the East Precinct, and to appoint the place where the meeting-house shall be built.

Having built a meeting-house, and provided themselves with a minister, and become “competently filled with inhabitants,” the East Precinct petitioned the General Court to be incorporated as a town. It appears from our records that there was no opposition to the measure, from Norton: for, Dec. 7, 1725, “at a meeting of the Inhabitants, Legally warned, there was a vote called for to know whether the East Precinct Should Be made into a township, and there was but one hand heald up; and there was a negative vote called for, and there was not one hand up.” According to the prayer of the petitioners, the town of Easton was incorporated Dec. 21, 1725; and thenceforth all municipal connection between the two towns ceased.

NORTH PRECINCT.

Two or three years after the organization of the East Precinct, a movement was made in the westerly part of the town to take another slice from the North-Purchase part of Norton. May 15, 1721, at a town-meeting,—

“4ly, thay voted not to Grant the desire of Thomas Skinner and his neighbours concerning thayre being dismissed from sd. towne, in order to thare Gitting a towneship with Part of Dorgester and Part of attleborough.”

But the friends of the movement were not satisfied with the above vote, and therefore renewed their request the next year with no better success; for, at a meeting, March 20, 1722, “3ly, they voted that they would not Sett of Mr. Skinner and that Naiberhood to be a precent acording to theyr Bounds that they requested.” This second denial of their request seems to have moderated the zeal of the petitioners, but not entirely to have removed it. The probable reason why they wished for a precinct was the inconvenience felt of going five, six, and seven miles to meeting; and they desired to be empowered to establish the ministry among themselves.

After waiting a few years till their numbers were somewhat increased, they again renewed their request, and were again disappointed. The record says, that at a town-meeting, May 8, 1727, —

“2ly, it ’twas Put to vote, whether they would Give Liberty to Thomas Skinner, Sener, and fifteen others, to Go of to be a Precent with part of the towne of Atelboro’ and Part of the towne of Dorchester, acording to the Bounds which they Pititioned to sd. towne for; and it pased in the negative.” — “3ly, the question was Put to vote, whether they ware willing that the Persons that have Pititioned should Go to joyne with Part of sd. townes to be made a Precent; and it Pased in the negative.”

Thus baffled in their attempts to be erected into a precinct, they take another tack; looking towards the establishment of a second society, as it appears by this record: —

“Feb. 19, 1728–9, it ’twas put to vote, whether the towne would Buld a meeting-house upon ye minestree Land in ye Northern Part of the towne, and setell a minester thare, and pay him out of the towne treasury; and it Pased in the negative. And then it ’twas Put to vote, whether the towne would

Sett of ye Inhabetance in ye north Part of this towne, acording to the Bounds they Petitioned for; and it Pased in ye negative."¹

The petitioners, again defeated, again renew their request. Every failure had only added new converts to the cause; and a pretty general feeling was manifested in the north part of the town to have better ministerial accommodations, and another determined attempt was made to wring from the town the boon they asked. All things being matured, a town-meeting was called, to be "on Monday, the 21st day of September, 1730." The friends of a new precinct were out in full strength. It soon became evident that the house was about equally divided upon the question, and hence great precaution was necessary on the one side and the other to insure success and to prevent defeat. A moderator (John Briggs, 2d) is chosen from the south part of the town. Rather an ill omen, this; but it does not discourage the Northerners. Probably "noses had been counted." Now came the "tug of war."

"2ly, thare was a vote Called for by ye moderator, for those that ware for seting of ye northern Parts of norton, acording to theyr Request, to Bring in paper-votes, writ upon (Sett of); and those that ware against it to Bring in theyr votes, writ upon (not Sett of); and there was 54 votes for seting of, and 47 votes for not seting of."

The combined northern forces triumphed, and great was the rejoicing on their part. A portion of the de-

¹ I am informed by D. S. Cobb, Esq., that his uncle, Capt. Daniel Smith, recently deceased, had told him a spot for a meeting-house was once staked out, not far from said Smith's house, on the southerly side of Rumford River, westerly of the road on the high ground near the bridge. This is about a mile and a half northerly from the Centre Village of Norton, where the first meeting-house was erected; and would have been nearly in the middle of the tract of land then constituting the town of Norton. If the house had been placed there, it would, no doubt, have given satisfaction to the people of what is now Mansfield; and, perhaps, might have kept the two towns together even to the present time. It would have been a very pleasant site for a meeting-house.

But probably the southerly portion of the town, having a meeting-house that well accommodated them, did not care to incur the expenses of removing it, or of building a new one; and hence no arrangement satisfactory to the northern part could be made.

feated party consult together for a few moments, and then cause the following entry to be made on the town-records : —

“ We, the subscribers, are of opinion, that the vote Called to sett of ye northern Part of norton, acording to their Request, was an elegall vote ; and tharefore we do enter our Protests against it, — Eleazer Fisher, Sener, Isreall woodward, Elezer Fisher, Juner, Ebenezer Burt, Jonathan Burt, John Cobb, Benjamin Selee, Nathaniell Fisher, Juner, John Brannam, Jeremiah newland, Robert Tucker, John Fisher, Joseph Gray, Sener, Joseph Gray, Juner, Joseph Hodges, William Ware, Ephraim Lane, Nathan Fisher, Ichabod Shaw, Silvenus Cambell, Peter aldrich, nemiah Fisher, Edmun Fisher, Benjamin Lane, Benjamin Hodges, Thomas Shaw, Sener, Ebenezer Eddy, Sener, Daniell Braman, Nathaniell Fisher, Nathaniell Braman, George Leonard.”

Having thus obtained the consent of the town for their erection into a precinct, the Northerners forthwith, by petition, appear before the General Court, asking that legal steps be taken to invest them with the powers, privileges, &c., of a parish. The accompanying documents show that their prayer was soon granted : —

“ On the petition of Nicholas White and others, of Norton. In the house of Representatives, June 23rd, 1731. — Read, and ordered that the petitioners, with their estates, agreeable to the bounds hereafter mentioned, — viz., westwardly by Attleborough bounds ; north-eastwardly by Stoughton bounds ; eastwardly by Easton bounds, until it comes to be due west from the house of Erasmus Babbit, deceased ; from thence to the south of Samuel Caswell’s house, three rods or poles ; from thence to the centre between the public meeting-house in said Norton, and the common land upon the eight-mile plain in said Norton ; from said centre to said Attleborough bounds, on the south of Benjamin Lane’s house ; and on the north of the house of Isaac Shepard, deceased, — be, and hereby are, erected into and made a distinct and separate precinct, and vested with like powers, privileges, and immunities as other precincts within this Province have, or by law ought to enjoy.

“ Sent up for concurrence.”

"In council, June 23rd, 1731. — Read and concured.

"J. WILLARD, Secretary."

"June 23rd, 1731. — Consented to: "J. BELCHER.

"Copy examined, "Per J. WILLARD, Secretary."

On the 16th of August, 1731, George Leonard, justice of the peace, issued a warrant, directed to Josiah Pratt, one of the inhabitants of the North Precinct of Norton, authorizing him to notify the inhabitants of the precinct to meet at the house of Isaac Wellman, "on Tuesday, the 31st of August," to choose precinct officers. At this meeting, Nicholas White was chosen moderator; Benjamin Williams, clerk; John Skinner, Josiah Pratt, and Ephraim Leonard, assessors; Joseph Elliot, treasurer; Thomas Skinner, Nicholas White, and Ephraim Grover, prudential committee.

At this time, the North Precinct "contained 30 or 35 families. They soon made preparations for a place of public worship. A small frame was put up, a little south of the present central Congregational meeting-house, on the common." Efforts were then made for establishing public worship. Sept. 4, 1731, the precinct "vote to cover and enclose the meeting-house already put up," — "to put in window-frames, lay the floor," &c., and appropriate forty pounds (old tenor) to defray the expense. Sept. 28, Thomas Skinner, Samuel Bailey, and Ephraim Grover, were chosen "a committee to inspect the work done on the meeting-house."

Ephraim Leonard and Josiah Pratt are empowered "to obtain a minister to preach 3 months," and twenty pounds were raised "to support the minister." Dec. 13, "voted to hire a minister to preach the gospel in the precinct until the first of March."

During the winter of 1731-2, it is supposed, the precinct had stated preaching, in accordance with the vote passed Dec. 13. March 27, 1732, at a legal meeting of the precinct, it was "voted to give Rev. Mr. Ephraim Little, of Scituate, a call to settle with them in the work of the Gospel ministry;" and they agreed to

give him a yearly salary of a hundred pounds, old tenor, during his ministry in the precinct, and offer him, as a settlement, two hundred pounds, to be paid in annual instalments of fifty pounds.

These proceedings were "without a negative vote." Mr. Little, however, gave a "negative" answer; no doubt, much to the disappointment of the precinct.

We had prepared a full ecclesiastical history of the North Precinct; but our crowded pages and other good reasons oblige us to omit most of it.

Oct. 7, 1734, Abiel Howard, of Bridgewater, was unanimously chosen pastor. "He could not see his way clear to accept the call;" and hence the precinct try again. May 20, 1735, they unanimously gave a call to Atherton Wales, of Braintree; but he declined it. With commendable perseverance, the precinct, Dec. 20, 1735, unanimously invited Samuel Toby, of Sandwich, to settle. His answer was "No." Again they look about for a candidate. One is procured. He is acceptable to the people, who, Sept. 7, 1736, ask Ebenezer White, of Brookline, to be their "gospel minister;" and, after about four weeks' deliberation, he accepted the invitation.

The ordination took place, Feb. 23, 1737; but who took part in the interesting services of consecrating him to the work of the gospel ministry is unknown, as no records are to be found. It is uncertain on what particular day the church was embodied. No record of the organization of the church, or the names of those who composed it, are extant among the church or parish papers; but Rev. Mr. Avery fortunately made in his church-records the following entry, which throws some light upon the matter. We therefore transcribe it.

"Jan. 2nd, 1736-7. — Dismissed (at yr request), in order to ye gathering a Chh., Nicholas White,* John Hall,* Thomas Skinner,* Sen., John Skinner, Sen.,* Ephraim Grover, Sen.,* Benja. Williams, Seth Dorman,* Josiah Pratt, Thomas Fillebrown, Joshua Atherton, Stephen Blancher, Wm. Pain, Benj. Lane, Willm. Dean, Jonathan Pratt, Joshua Williams,

Andrew Grover, Thomas Grover, Sen.,* Ezra Skinner, — members of ye Chh. in Norton, Living in ye North precinct.”

Those marked with a star were original members of the church from which they were dismissed; so that just half — reckoning the pastor among the number — of those who were embodied, Oct. 28, 1714, as the first church of Norton, were among the original members of the North-Precinct Church. They parted from their old associates and pastor in the goodly fellowship of the gospel and in the spirit of Jesus. They parted because they thought the interests of religion demanded a settled ministry in the northerly part of the town. One proof of the fraternal feeling existing between the parent and the child is the following vote, copied from Mr. Avery's records: —

“July 1st, 1737. — Att a chh.-meeting before ye sacrament, ye chh., by vote, gave two bacars they bought with yr own money, and also ye bacar given by Mrs. Hannah Briggs, ye wife of Benj. Briggs, Sen., of Taunton, with her Consent, to ye 2nd Chh. in Norton, for yr. use and improvement.”

Mr. White's ministry was not of the most peaceful character. He was probably too liberal in his views to satisfy many of the “stricter sort” of his parish. He was of a feeble constitution, and hence frequently was unable to attend to the duties of his office. Just as negotiations for his withdrawal from the ministry were completed, and a successor had been chosen, or on the 18th of January, 1761, he left the troubles of earth for the peaceful realms of the spirit-world. Jan. 12, 1761, six days previous to Mr. White's death, the precinct chose “Roland Green, of Malden, to settle with them in the work of the Gospel ministry.” He was ordained Aug. 26, 1761, under the shade of some venerable trees, which stood near the westerly end of the present Congregational Meeting-house, in Mansfield. Mr. Green continued in the ministry till July 4, 1808; when he died suddenly of apoplexy, at Norton, whither he had come that morning to join in a public celebration of the day.

In April, 1770, the North Precinct of Norton was, by an Act of the General Court, incorporated into a separate district called Mansfield.¹ Of the causes that led to a total separation of the precinct from the town, we are not cognizant. Probably the precinct thought they had so far increased in importance and dignity as to be able to take care of themselves; and certainly, after having a tutelage of about thirty-nine years, they were worthy to assume the powers and duties of a corporated town. And yet, for some years after the erection of the precinct into a district, it voted with Norton in the choice of representatives to the General Court.

Perhaps the following votes of the town might have had some influence in hastening the separation : —

March 19, 1749–50, the town voted down a motion to have one-third part of the town-meetings at the North-Precinct Meeting-house.

March 29, 1756, “voted not to have any of the town-meetings held in the North precinct.”

May 21, 1764, “voted that one-third part of the meetings in said town shall be held at the North-Precinct meeting-house.”

March 9, 1767, “The town voted to hold no more of the town-meetings in the North precinct of sd. town.” This vote was probably the straw that broke the camel’s back; for an immediate movement was made towards a separation. The precinct seems not to have been unwilling that the child should navigate the sea of life alone, as will be seen by the action of the town : —

“SEP. 14th, 1767.

“Voted, whereas the North precinct of the town of Norton have desired said town to vote them off a district, the sd. town doth hereby signify their consent to the same, if the General Court should think proper to set off and make sd. precinct a

¹ The difference between a district and a town was that the former were not allowed to choose a separate representative to the General Court, but were connected with some other town or district for that purpose. A few years after the incorporation of Mansfield as a district, a General Act was passed by the Legislature, raising all districts to the dignity of towns.

separate district; sd. North Precinct taking their proportionable part of the poor of said town, and also their proportionable part of the town-stock."

After negotiating with the General Court more than two years, the court, as we have stated, declared the child of full age to act for itself. The bounds between the towns were the same as between the town and precinct already given.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE DISSENTING CHURCH.

"My name is written in the Book of Life." — P. J. BAILEY.

THE reader has probably noticed, that in the chapter on the ministry of Mr. Avery, p. 107, allusion is made to those who had set up a meeting in opposition to the First Church; and also, on pp. 108 and 109, seven persons were suspended for their separation from Mr. Avery's church, and joining with those who had set up a separate meeting.

After a long and patient search, we have found the record of these dissenters, who formed a church and society, and maintained worship according to their own idea of things. They were, no doubt, what were called in those days "New Lights," and adherents to many of the doctrines promulgated by the leaders of the revival of 1740. Most of them were residents of the easterly part of Norton; some of Easton and Taunton.

As this movement, in several respects, was quite an important one, and as few at the present day know any thing relative to it, we shall let their own records tell the reason which induced them to take the steps they did, and set forth the principles on which they established the new organization. We retain their

own phraseology ; taking the liberty to supply, in brackets, such words as seem necessary to complete the sense.

The spelling is so bad, that few of our readers would be able to make out what is meant if we copied the original : therefore we take the liberty to correct that.

“ The Records of a Church of Christ in Norton, in the County of Bristol, in New England, that dissented from the Constitution of the Church in this land for the following reasons ; to wit :—

“ 1. Because that they did not particularly examine those admitted to their communion, as they ought to do.

“ 2. Because they did not hold a gospel discipline.

“ 3. They deny the fellowship of the saints.

“ 4. Their settling ministers by way of salary.

“ 5. By their allowing of half-way members.

“ All which particulars we look upon to be contrary to the rules that Christ and his apostles practised.

“ And after due pains being taken, and no way [being devised] to have the difficulty removed, we, in faithfulness to the cause and interest of Christ’s kingdom here in this world, did bear faithful testimony against their proceeding.

“ Then the Lord put it into our hearts to [look to] him for direction ; and we set ourselves to seek the Lord by prayers. And the Lord put it into our hearts to set apart the first day of February, 1747,¹ to be kept as a day of solemn fasting and prayer to Almighty God, for the accession of his Holy Spirit to direct us in the way he would have us to walk in. And the Lord so wonderfully owned and blessed us, that ten persons solemnly covenanted with God, and one with another, for the building of [a] Church, and maintaining the worship of God, in this place.”

“ The articles of faith and Covenant drawn up and agreed upon by the Church of Christ in Norton :—

“ 1. We believe that there is one only living and true God, who is a spirit ; of himself from all eternity to all eternity unchangeably the same ; infinitely holy, wise, omnipotent, just, merciful and gracious, omniscient, true, and faithful

¹ This was, no doubt, 1748, new style.

God ; filling all places, and not included in any place ; essentially happy in the possession of his own glorious perfections.

“ 2. That this God subsists in three glorious persons,—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which are but one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

“ 3. That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God, wherein he hath given us a perfect rule of faith and practice.

“ 4. That God hath, for the manifestation of his glorious perfections, ordained whatsoever comes to pass.

“ 5. That God, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth, and all things in them ; and doth still uphold all things by the word of his power.

“ 6. That God did create man in his own image,—in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness,—capable of obeying and enjoying of him ; and so made with him a covenant of life, the conditions whereof were perfect obedience.

“ 7. That man soon fell into sin against God, by which he brought himself and all his posterity into a state of Death.

“ 8. That, man being thus dead, his recovery is wholly in and from God.

“ 9. That God the Father hath from all eternity chosen a number in Christ to eternal salvation.

“ 10. That Christ did, in the fulness of time, take on him the human nature ; lived a perfect life on earth ; died a cursed death on the Cross ; arose from the dead ; ascended into the heaven, and there ever liveth to make intercession for them.

“ 11. That the Holy Spirit of God, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and he only, can and doth make a particular application of the salvation purchased by Christ for every elect soul.

“ 12. That we are of the number that was chosen from eternity¹ in Christ ; and that he hath come and obeyed and suffered, arose and ascended, and doth ever plead before God

¹ It is a somewhat remarkable fact, that all those who believe in the popular doctrine of “election” are sure that *they* are of the number chosen to eternal salvation. But their daily intercourse with the world does not always impress others with a favorable idea of their superior sanctity.

Rev. I. Backus, in his “Church History,” vol. iii. p. 160, speaking of this church, says, “Some of the members, especially they who lived in Easton, had run into the most delusive notions that could be conceived of,—even so far as to forsake their lawful wives and husbands, and to take others ; and they got so far as to declare themselves to be perfect and immortal, or that the resurrection was past already, as some did in the apostolic age.”

the Father for us ; which he hath given us to believe by sending the holy spirit to convince us of our miserable and lost condition, and discovered to and offered to us a glorious [salvation] in his suitableness and sufficiency, and [invited] us to embrace him with our whole souls ; whereby he is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

“ 13. That the life of religion consists [in] the knowledge of God, and a conformity to him in the inner man ; which necessarily produces an external conformity to his laws.

“ 14. That all doubting in a believer is sinful ; being contrary to the commands of God, hurtful to the soul, and a hinderance to the performance of duty.

“ 15. That true believers, by virtue [of] their union to Christ, have fellowship one with another, whereby they are made partakers of each other's gifts and graces.

“ 16. That the first day of the [week], commonly called the Lord's day, is the Christian Sabbath.

“ 17. That true believers, and none but such, are members of the Catholic Church of Christ, and have a right to all the internal and external gifts and privileges that Christ hath left in his Church in the world ; in order to the right enjoyment of which, and the due administration of Church Discipline, [it] is meet, and according to scripture, that there be particular Churches of believers.”

“ Of which we shall next consider, and say, —

“ 1. First, it is a number of true believers, by mutual acquaintance and communion voluntarily covenanting and embodying together for the carrying-on the worship and service of God.

“ 2. That [there] are two sacraments of the New Testament, which Christ has instituted to be practised or observed in his Church till his coming ; (viz.), Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

“ 3. The most of [us] hold that true believers have a right to give up their children to God in Baptism ; yet a different opinion in this point don't break our fellowship.

“ 4. That whosoever pretends to administer or partake of the seals of the covenant of grace, without saving faith, are in danger of sealing their own damnation.

“ Therefore, the doors of the Church are to be carefully kept at all times against all such as cannot give a scriptural evidence of their union to Christ by faith.

"5. That a number of true believers, being thus essentially and visibly united together, have power to choose and ordain such officers as Christ hath appointed in his Church, — such as bishops and deacons; and, by the same power, to depose such officers as evidently appear to walk contrary to the Gospel. Yet we believe, in such cases, 'tis convenient to take advice of the neighboring Churches of the same Constitution.

"6. That, before choice and ordination of such officers, trial be made of their qualifications by the Church in which they are to be officers in.

"7. That the Bishop or Elder, by virtue of their office, have no more power to decide any case or controversy in the Church than any private brother: but his work is to lead in the meetings of the Church, and to administer the Sacrament; and to devote himself to the work of teaching and warning, rebuking and exhorting, the people, publicly and from house to house.

"8. That the deacon's office [and] work is to take care of the poor and the church treasure, and to distribute to the support of the Pastor, the propagation of religion, and to minister at the Lord's table.

"9. That all the gifts and graces that are bestowed upon any of the members are to be improved by them for the good of the whole; in order to which, there ought to be such a gospel freedom, whereby the Church may know where every particular gift is, that it may be improved in its proper place and to its right end, for the glory of God and the good of the Church."

"THE COVENANT.

"Thus having declared our faith concerning the Trinity, and of the state of man before and after the fall, the way of salvation by Christ, how we are brought into the Covenant of Grace, of the communion of saints, the nature and power of a church, &c., —

"We do now, in the presence of the Great God, and in the faith above and before declared, and by the present help of Divine Grace, renewed and united by giv[ing] up ourselves to God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be for him, and no other; freely submitting ourselves to him, to be at his disposal, for his glory; taking him as our chiefest good; promising, by the help of Divine Grace, to watch against

every sin, corruption, and temptation, and to hold a continual and perpetual warfare with the same; looking to Christ Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith; promising to watch over one another in the love of God, and to hold communion together in the ordinances and discipline of the Gospel Church; submitting ourselves to one another in love, and submitting ourselves to the discipline of this Church as a part of Christ's mystical body, according as we shall be guided by the spirit of God in his word, and by the help of Divine Grace; still to be looking for more light from the Lord, believing that he will yet further and more graciously open his word and the mysteries of his kingdom; looking and waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen."

It is much to be regretted that these ten persons, who were so sure that they were "of the number chosen from eternity," did not append their names to this statement of reasons, declaration of faith, and covenant; for nowhere upon the records does it appear who they were.

Possibly they did not immediately sign the covenant, and that they were of the number — whose names we shall hereafter give — that covenanted with the church previous to the ordination of a minister.

The matter is left in doubt; and eternity will probably only reveal who were these "ten righteous men" that were to save the Sodom of Norton from destruction.

Having adopted the covenant, &c., they began to look about for an elder or teacher in spiritual things. We will let their own records tell how they reached the end desired:—

"August ye 1, 1748. — A meeting [was] appointed to inquire duty of God, in or[der] that God would make duty plain to us, in order to have a Church completed with officers; And, after solemn prayer to Almighty God, it appeared duty to us to appoint August ye 11 to be kept as a day of fasting and prayer to Almighty God, that he would give us a Pastor and other officers in this church."

"August ye 11, — being the day set apart by this church for solemn prayer to God, — the church came together, and

some brethren from Rehoboth and Attleboro'. After solemn prayer to God, and a sermon preached, William Carpenter — after being called by this Church to the work of the ministry — gave himself to God and this Church, to serve them in the work of the ministry, and was received in fellow[ship], and, at the same time, signed [the] covenant with this church. Then, at the same time, the church agreed to appoint Wednesday, Sept. ye 7, for the day of solemn ordination to ordain William Carpenter to be pastor of our formed church in Norton; and, at the same time, agreed to send to the following churches, — to wit, Canterbury, Providence, Rehoboth, Attleboro', and Middleboro'."

"Sept. ye 3 being appointed by this church to be kept as a day of solemn prayer to God, to beg his help and assistance in the ordination of our pastor, and [to] choose deacons for this church, — after solemn prayer to God, the church chose James Briggs and Phineas Briggs for deacons of this church."

Agreeably to previous arrangement, the ordination services took place on Sept. 7, 1748. The churches above named, — except Middleborough, — with their pastors and messengers, were present, and formed the council: viz., Rev. Solomon Pain, of Canterbury; Rev. Joseph Snow, of Providence; Rev. John Pain, of Rehoboth; Rev. Nathaniel Shepard, of Attleborough. The records say, —

"After Mr. Carpenter declared [his] call to the work of the ministry, and his call to take the particular charge of this church; [and] after solemn prayer to Almighty God for his assistance in the work of sd. day, and a sermon preached by Mr. Snow, — then proceeded in the solemn work of the ordination. Mr. John Pain gave Mr. Carpenter his charge; and Mr. Shepard, the right hand of fellowship: and a glorious time it was. Glory to God alone!"

Sept. 8, — the day succeeding the ordination of Mr. Carpenter, — James Briggs and Phineas Briggs, who, on the 3d inst., had been chosen deacons, were ordained; and thus "the church was completed with officers," according to the ideas of its founders.

Deacon James Briggs was the son of Richard, one of the first settlers of this town; and was born

March 16, 1718–19. He married Damaris White, May 5, 1743; and had eight children.

Phineas Briggs was probably the son of John Briggs, 2d, and Hannah his wife, whose maiden name was Rocket; and is supposed to have been born about 1710. He married, Dec. 27, 1739, Esther Finney; and had nine children.

For two or three years after the organization of this church, they appear to have prospered quite well; and frequent additions were made to their numbers. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper seems to have been observed quite often, with much interest, — sometimes, and perhaps regularly, twice a month. We will make a few extracts from the records, to show something of the spirit that pervaded the church: —

“Lord's day, Sept. ye 18, 1748. — The Lord's [Supper] was received in this Church in the power of the Holy Ghost; and a blessed day it was. all the glory be given to God.”

“Lord's day, October ye 20, 1751. — The Lord's supper was administered in this Church by the special assistance of the spirit of God and the power of the Holy Ghost, every member covenanting with God in a Solemn manner.”

“Lord's day, July ye 7, 1754. — The Lord's Supper was administered in this church, with considerable of the presence of God.”

“April ye 6, 1760. — The Lord's Supper was received in this church with much of the refreshing influences of the spirit of God.”

This church — born, no doubt, of a dislike to Rev. Mr. Avery — had not probably within it the elements of long life. It was not probably in fellowship with the regular Congregational churches in this vicinity.

Some of the ministers who assisted in the ordination of Mr. Carpenter are supposed to have been Baptists; or, if not, it is presumed they dissented from the established churches, and very likely became, ere long, of the Baptist faith. Some of the members of the church, perhaps, had strong predilections to Baptist notions. At any rate, the church, from some cause, was broken up in the spring of 1761; and from its ruins sprang

a Baptist church and society, whose history we shall record in the next chapter.

The record-book of the dissenters continued to be the record-book of the Baptist society ; and the records are continued without interruption in the same handwriting, which is probably that of Deacon Gershom Cambell, who appears to have been clerk for many years.

This dissenting church and society never had a meeting-house, but held religious worship in the private dwellings of its members. It is supposed that most of the members, and perhaps all, were baptized by sprinkling ; and we know that some of them were believers in infant-baptism, for the record shows that the children were "sprinkled."

The following are the names of those who covenanted with the church before the ordination of Mr. Carpenter. We give their names in the order in which they were admitted.

Sarah Cambell, 1st, Sarah Cambell, 2d, James Briggs, Abigail Cambell, 1st, Seth Babbit, Phineas Briggs, Esther Briggs, Lydia Briggs, Jabez Briggs, Simeon Babbit, Stephen Blanchard, Dorothy Smith, Joshua Cambell, Gershom Cambell, Ruth Blanchard, Mary Pike, Damaris Briggs, Lydia Cambell.

The following are those who covenanted with the church after the ordination of Mr. Carpenter :—

John Finney, 2d, Sarah Balcom, William Cambell, William Leonard, George Briggs, Mary Smith, Daniel Finney, Stephen Haskins, Mary Briggs, Mary Story, Abigail White, John Woodward, Deborah Woodward, Mary Finney, 2d, John Finney, 1st, Benajah Smith, Elizabeth Finney, Tabitha Babbit, Keziah Andrews, Bethiah Soulard, Mary Allen, 2d, Sarah Lincoln, Silence Hewit, Peter Soulard, Abigail Austin, Mary Allen, 1st, James Leonard, Richard Eason, Mary Haskins, Ebenezer Jones, Patience Cook, Daniel Niles, Esther Robins, Shubel Cambell, Sarah Allen, Mary Finney.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE OLD BAPTIST CHURCH.

“By one spirit are we all baptized into one body.” — PAUL.

THE reader, being acquainted with the contents of the last chapter, need not be informed that the society whose history we are now to record is a continuation of the dissenting church under a new name and a somewhat different faith. The first record of immersion was that of Mary Jones, by Elder Backus, Jan. 9, 1761; and, March 1, 1761, Mary Phillips covenanted with the church. We now quote from the records:—

“March ye 5, 1761. — Elder William Carpenter was baptised by immersion by Elder Backus; and, at the same time, Patience Cook was baptised by immersion.”

“March ye 18, 1761. — At a church-meeting held in Norton, after solemn prayer to God, [and] after some discourse on many points, the church, by vote, adjourned ye sd. meeting till March ye 24.”

“March ye 24, 1761. — Ye Church met; and, after opening ye meeting by solemn prayer to God, —

“First, ye Church voted the Confession of Faith and Covenant of the Baptist Constitution. Then a number signed sd. Covenant; viz., William Carpenter, John Finney, Peter Soulard, Gershom Cambell, Daniel Niles, Eben Jones, Jabez Briggs, Abigail Austin, Sarah Cambell, Patience Cook, Mary Jones, Mary Phillips.

“2nd, The Church made fresh choice of William Carpenter to be the elder of this Church.

“3, The Church voted that the first of April should be the day for to set apart our Pastor to the work of the ministry in the Baptist Constitution, and to send to the Baptist Churches in Middleborough (viz.) Elder Backus and Elder Hinds.”

"April ye 1, 1761. — Mr. William Carpenter was set apart to the work of the ministry and Church, [and] settled in the gospel order in the Baptist Constitution, by Elders Backus and Hinds, Elders of the Baptist Churches in Middleboro', with their assistance from sd. churches, by fasting and prayer and the laying-on of hands, giving his charge and the right hand of fellowship. [The same day], Benajah Smith, Mary Finney, Mary Poick (?), and Tabitha Briggs, signed the covenant."

Mr. Carpenter, having now been twice baptized and twice ordained, must have been well prepared for his duties as minister, if mere outward ordinances were all that was needed to give unction to his words. Without any date — but between those of April 5 and April 9, 1761 — is to be found this record, which shows the foundation whereon was reared the Baptist church : —

"Here it may be understood that the constitution of this church was changed from a Congregation[al] Church to the Baptist Constitution, and to admit none to Church-fellowship but those that are Baptised by immersion."

April 9, 1761, Gershom Cambell was chosen deacon. Deacon Cambell was the son of Sylvanus and Mary Cambell; and was born Nov. 14, 1704. He married Sarah Andrews, May 9, 1732; and had several children. During the latter part of his life, he was supported by the town; as it appears from an order, made in 1778, to pay Dr. George Wheaton for visits to and medicine for him. He probably died not far from that time.

Oct. 14, Jabez Briggs was chosen deacon: and Nov. 11 was appointed "to set apart the deacons by solemn ordination;" which was accordingly done "by solemn fasting and prayer, and the Laying-on of the hands." Jabez Briggs was the son of Deacon John and Hannah (Rocket) Briggs, and was born June 27, 1723. He married Tabitha Babbit, 1751 (?),

and had five children. The church being thus organized and officered, we find but little to record for some years.

April 23, 1767, James Briggs, who had recently joined the church, "was made choice of for a Deacon, and set into that office." He is supposed to have been the same person who was deacon of the "Dissenting Church."

The ministry of Mr. Carpenter seems, in the main, to have been peaceful and prosperous; though as pastor of a church that had withdrawn from the regularly constituted one of the town, and, of course, unpopular, he must have experienced some trials and difficulties which severely tested his Christian principles. Especially was this the case during his connection with the dissenting church.

For some years, he was taxed for the support of the First Church and Society; which was a very unjust proceeding. He and his friends made repeated attempts to get released from being rated for the support of Mr. Palmer, but in vain. The precinct were inexorable. Mr. Carpenter, at length, refused to pay his precinct taxes; and the constable took his property, and sold it. Mr. Carpenter brought an action for damage before the Court of Common Pleas at Taunton, in June, 1756; but, on account of some informalities in bringing the action, he lost his case. He then appealed to the Supreme Court, with no better success. Judgment was rendered against him there. It is presumed that Mr. Carpenter brought another action against the town: for at the town-meeting, March, 1759, a committee of five was chosen to "settle the affair with William Carpenter, concerning his rates;" who, at an adjourned meeting on the 16th of April, report "that sd. Carpenter be discharged from paying any rate or assessment he is now chargeable with to any constable of sd. town, on condition to [he?] acquit and discharge sd. town from any action or actions that he might bring against sd. town, or any

person or persons, as constables [or] assessors, on account of any Rates the sd. Carpenter hath heretofore paid.”¹ From the town-records (book i. p. 207), it appears that Mr. Carpenter assented to these terms.

I have, however, found a document, signed jointly by four of the committee and by Mr. Carpenter, and dated “April ye 16th, 1759,” which differs somewhat from the report just given. The difference is verbal rather than essential. From this it appears that Carpenter was to pay the execution the constable “recovered against him; and that ye town pay to sd. Carpenter ye Execution which he recovered against ye town of Norton; and that ye town of Norton Discharge sd. Carpenter from any rates for ye futer, so long as he continue in the same station as he is in, and pay all ye Rates which is not paid,” &c.

Thus it would seem that the matter was finally settled in Mr. Carpenter’s favor; which all, I think, must acknowledge was settling it rightly. Justice, though tardy, at length triumphed. We hear of no further trouble subsequent to this.

All we can learn relative to the death of Mr. Carpenter is contained in this extract from the church-records:—

“Aug. ye 23, 1768, Departed this life, that servant of the Lord, Elder William Carpenter, in the 58th year of his age, — a faithful laborer in the Gospel of Christ, who laboured in the Church for 20 years in the work of the ministry.”

This, of course, includes the time of his connection with both churches.

Rev. Mr. Carpenter “was born in Rehoboth, in 1710.”² He married, about 1734, Miss Abigail White; and the births of eight children are recorded on the town-books of Attleborough, and three others in Norton.

¹ This is dated April 10, 1759.

² Backus’s Church History, vol. iii. p. 159.

His wife died April 2, 1756. He married for second wife, in 1757, Sarah Blake, of Taunton; who probably survived him, but we know not when she died.

Mr. Carpenter lived at the place since owned by Dr. Leavit Bates, directly in front of the Trinitarian Meeting-house; and is said frequently to have preached in the open air, standing upon one of those great rocks which still remain near where his house stood.

The death of their revered pastor was, no doubt, a severe blow to the society. They had probably struggled hard for an existence thus far; and they were not quite prepared to give up the principles they deemed all-important, even though required to make still greater sacrifices. After recovering in some measure from the shock they had received by the demise of their spiritual adviser, the records say, "the church, being in some sense sensible of the loss we met with in the death of our dear Pastor, met in the month of Sept., 1768, to consider what to do in our solitary case; and the church unanimously agreed to continue to uphold the worship of God in this place." A praiseworthy resolution. But difficulties stood in the way of its successful accomplishment. They were few in number, and not blessed with a large amount of worldly goods. These and other influences conspired to bring about the change of affairs we shall now proceed to record. We quote from the records: —

"The Baptist Society in Taunton (not having a church gathered, though they have several brethren amongst them who belong to neighboring churches) sent a committee to the Baptist Church in Norton, with a proposal of joining to maintain worship together; and, after they had considered of it, they agreed to appoint a meeting at their meeting-house in Taunton for to seek Divine direction in the affair, and to confer upon it, as well as to ask advice of others.

"Accordingly, on Jan. 3, 1769, the church of Norton and the society in Taunton met; and Elder Backus, of Middleborough, with several other publick laborers, — viz., Bloss and

Everett, [of] Attleborough; Mr. Carver (?), of Easton;¹ and Mr. John Martin, of Rehoboth, — were present; and Elder Backus preached from Isa. lxi. 3, 4. After repeated addresses to God for teaching and help, they came on to confer upon these affairs. The articles of Faith and Church Covenant in Norton were publicly read, and no objection was made against them. But one of the brethren in Taunton mentioned two things in the conduct of the church, which he objected against; which were their allowing of communion at the Lord's table with unbaptized persons, and their allowing such to preach amongst them.

“These things were publicly discoursed upon: and it appeared they did not allow any to come to the ordinance of the Supper with them but such as were baptized by immersion; though one brother was received there who held it [as] his opinion that he could commune with pedobaptist Churches; yet now he said he did not think he should act upon that opinion, when it should grieve pious minds; upon which, satisfaction was manifested upon that point. As to the other point, the brethren and society of Taunton manifested they should not be willing to receive any to preach in the meeting-house who were not baptized by immersion; though they would lay no restraint upon brethren as to their receiving such into their own houses. The brethren of Taunton also objected that there were two brethren who stood in a relation to the church in Norton, which they had some difficulty about; which they desired might be cleared out of the way in a gospel line.

“These things being considered, the brethren of the society in general, of Taunton, voted that they freely receive them as a Church of Christ, to carry on the worship of God with them; freely owning that the government, as to worship, is in the church, and not in any other over them.

“And the teachers who were present from other places all advised them to unite together, if they could with clearness of mind. So these things were left with the church in Norton to act upon as they may see their way clear.”

“At a meeting of the Baptist church in Norton, April 10, 1769 (Elder Backus being present), these things were deliberately considered of; and the church concluded to accept of

¹ From the records of the Norton Church, it appears that a Baptist church was organized in Easton in 1762; and that, on July 21 of that year, Ebenezer Stevens was ordained pastor.

the proposals from Taunton, and to unite with that society upon the former proposals, provided they may be allowed the free exercise of their sentiments concerning each member improving their gifts in Divine worship.

“And also, as there appears some awakening lately in the minds of Norton people, they think it a reason also to have meeting there a part of the time, on the Sabbath at least, for the present.”

“At a meeting of the church in Norton, and the Society of Taunton, at their meeting-house in Taunton, April 11, 1769, the foregoing act of the church in Norton [was] read, and distinctly discoursed upon; and the society of Taunton voted to receive said church as they now have proposed.

“Attest:

“ISAAC BACKUS, Moderator.”

Thus the church without a society, and the society without a church, joined hands in wedlock; and as the bride left her native town on her marriage, and, as she was in duty bound to do, took up her residence with her husband, we shall be obliged to pass over a portion of her history somewhat rapidly.

The union being consummated, they began to look around for a spiritual adviser; and in June, 1769, “they gave Abraham Bloss, of Attleboro’, a call to settle with them in the work of the ministry.” He declined the invitation.

Though formally married, the church seems to have maintained the idea of “women’s rights;” for at a meeting held in Norton, Sept. 12, 1770, they voted to settle and maintain a minister by free-will offering and contribution, and, for his support, to provide a place. In October following, the society at Taunton acceded to this arrangement. May 29, 1772, the church invited Mr. William Nelson, of Middleborough, to settle with them as their minister.

He was ordained Nov. 12, 1772; and is supposed to have resigned about 1785, on account of ill health. While minister of the church, he resided in Norton, nearly opposite to the present Baptist Meeting-house. His brother Ebenezer was ordained pastor of the church, Nov. 10, 1790. He had preached to them

about two years previous to his ordination. He resigned Feb. 25, 1795. The church are supposed to have been without a settled minister for some years. May 22, 1799, Jonathan Smith was requested to continue the improvement of his gifts in the church, and to deliver his discourses from the pulpit.

In 1780, Ebenezer Burt and Joel Briggs, both of Norton, were chosen deacons of the church.

The precise date is not given on the records. Mr. Burt was the son of Ebenezer Burt, whose wife was Mrs. Naomi Acres, (daughter of Sylvanus Cambell); the grandson of Ebenezer and Lydia (Tippen) Burt; and was born Jan. 14, 1736-7. In December, 1762, he married Abigail Basset, and had by her six children. November, 1780, he married (second wife) Widow Mary Morse, daughter of Ebenezer Wellman, and by her had twelve children. In 1793, he removed to Dighton; and died in Greenwich, Dec. 10, 1807.

Joel Briggs was afterwards minister of the Baptist Society at East Stoughton.

April 8, 1805, the church chose Timothy Briggs and Noah Clapp, deacons. They were both of Norton. Mr. Briggs was the son of Timothy and Mary (Briggs) Briggs, and was born April 27, 1745. He was the grandson of Richard Briggs, one of the first settlers of Norton. He married, in 1770 (?), Abigail Patten, of Stoughton; and had three children. He died Nov. 10, 1819.

Mr. Clapp was the son of Samuel, jun., and Mary (Pomeroy) Clapp; grandson of Samuel and Elizabeth Clapp, who were among the early settlers of the town; and was born April 5, 1748. He married, April 16, 1776, Olive Shepard; and had eight children. He died Nov. 10, 1820.

June 21, 1805, Zephaniah Crossman was requested to continue with the church as a preacher "one year from the first of April last." Feb. 15, 1806, Mr. Crossman was invited to continue a year longer; but on the 14th of August, 1806, he was, by vote, dismissed "from any further labor in the church."

From the records, it does not appear very clearly who subsequently supplied the pulpit; but it is evident that there was a great want of harmony among the members. Frequent church-meetings were held to allay strife, and settle grievances and "labour" with members for real or supposed dereliction of duty. It is proper, perhaps, to throw the veil of oblivion over these petty shortcomings of a Christian life; but one case is so perfectly ludicrous in its nature, that we cannot withhold it. In 1770, Eleazer Fisher accused Mrs. Morton of "breaking fellowship with them, and joining with the world." The church met to investigate the matter, when it appeared that all the ground for his accusation was this: In going to and from meeting, and at other times, Mrs. Morton preferred the company of her *husband*, who was not, to that of *Fisher*, who *was*, a church-member; and hence he accused her of leaving the church, and joining in with the world! The church, of course, decided that Fisher's accusation was groundless; but, at several subsequent meetings, Fisher still persisting in his charges, the church finally admonished him to repent of his faults, and suspended him from communion.

In 1807, the church "voted to withdraw fellowship from" *forty-two* persons. A few such votes would, of course, destroy any church; and these frequent suspensions and withdrawals of fellowship, no doubt, did much to create alienation of feeling and discord among their ranks.

There was probably some disagreement in the society about doctrines; and this and the other causes we have mentioned eventually caused a division of the society. In the spring of 1822, a portion of the old church formed a Freewill-Baptist society, and organized a church June 13 of the same year, — a part of the members belonging to Norton;¹ and, for

¹ There are still some members of the Freewill church of North Taunton who belong to this town, and one of the deacons (Hiram J. Hunt) is a resident of Norton.

several years succeeding, the two societies, I am told, occupied the meeting-house alternately. But sometimes mistakes were made, and the ministers of the two societies would have appointments to preach in the house at the same time.

This, of course, was an unpleasant state of things, and probably led finally to the formation of the Baptist society in the east part of Norton; the Freewillers retaining possession of the old meeting-house in Taunton.

Feb. 14, 1824, there is made in the records of the old society the following entry: "voted to have preaching the ensuing year one-half the time." — "Voted to apply to Br. John Allen to be with us one-half the time; the preaching to be one-half the time in Norton, the other in Taunton." Immediately under this, without any date, is written with a pencil, "voted to break up, — ASAHEL TUCKER, Clerk." But, on a loose paper in the record-book, I find the minutes of some transactions of the church for several years, the last of which is dated "Taunton, Dec., 1834."

For about ten years previous to its dissolution, it is supposed the society did not have regular meetings; and many of the members, desiring some regular place of worship and a stated ministry, connected themselves with other societies in this vicinity. The vote "to break up," above mentioned, may have reference to the vote of the church which is recorded in the records of the present Baptist Church, and which constitutes the finale of the old society. We here transcribe it, and thus bring this chapter to a close: —

"At a meeting of the first Baptist Church in Taunton, holden at the house of Amos Keith, in Norton, Oct. 13th, 1835, for the purpose of considering the expediency of dissolving said Church and forming a new one, Chose Br. S. Hall, Moderator; and Br. H. C. Coombs, Clerk. The meeting then opened with prayer by Br. T. C. Tingley. The Church, after taking into consideration their present circumstances & future prospects, voted that the first Baptist Church in Taunton be dissolved."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

BAPTIST CHURCH AT WINNECONNET.

“Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.” — LUKE.

THIS church was formed immediately after the dissolution of the old one, as mentioned in the closing paragraph of the last chapter. The records say, —

“At a meeting of individuals, formerly members of [the] first Baptist Church in Taunton and Foxborough,¹ holden at the house of Mr. Amos Keith, in Norton, Oct. 13, 1835, after considering the expediency of constituting a new Church, voted to consider ourselves a Church, to be called *The First Baptist Church in Norton*.

“Voted to adopt the summary declaration of faith and practice of the Second Baptist Church in Boston, together with the following Resolution: —

“*Resolved*, That we disapprove of the use of ardent spirits, or the furnishing of it to others, excepting when absolutely necessary as a medicine in the case of sickness; and that all the members of the Church, and those who may hereafter become members, be requested to sign this resolution.”

Hence, with the gospel of Jesus in one hand and the temperance pledge in the other, this church started on her work of reform. A noble beginning. They were not, however, “The First Baptist Church in Norton;” for we have already shown, in the preceding chapter, that a Baptist church was organized here almost a century ago. Possibly these individuals might have considered themselves as the legitimate representatives of the old church in Norton, which

¹ It is not to be understood that any of these “individuals” were citizens of Foxborough. They were members of the church there, but resided elsewhere. For instance, Mr. Amos Keith, of this town, was for some time a member of the Foxborough Church previous to Oct. 13, 1835.

joined the Taunton Society in 1769. On being divorced, the church might have assumed its maiden name. If so, they could, with some propriety, have taken the name they did. The following are the names of those who organized themselves into a church at the time above stated: Caleb Atherton, Tisdale Godfrey, Beulah Lincoln, Nancy Lincoln, Hannah Thayer, Patience Lincoln, Hannah Clapp, Betsy Snow, Stella Keith, Nancy Austin, Anna Macomber, Joanna Atherton, Temperance White.¹

They resided in Mansfield, Easton, Taunton, and Norton.

Nov. 1, 1835, the church "Resolved to invite Br. Henry C. Coombs to preach six months." He had already been preaching for them for one month; and was no doubt, in some degree, instrumental in the formation of the new society. He is the son of Rev. Simeon Coombs, and was born in that part of Middleborough now Lakeville, Sept. 3, 1810. He was educated at the Pierce Academy of his native town, and at the New-Hampton Academy and Theological Institution in New Hampshire. His first settlement was here; but he was ordained at Middleborough. He left here Aug. 31, 1837. During his ministry in the year 1836, the present meeting-house of the society, at Winneconnet Village, was built. March 17, 1836, the church "Voted to receive or accept of the first Baptist meeting-house in Norton, as offered by the shareholders." I am told that Caleb Atherton and Asahel Snow owned a little more than half of the shares in the meeting-house. Mr. Moses Lincoln gave the land whereon it is built, with the proviso, that, if the house should ever come into the possession of others than those of Calvinistic-Baptist principles, the land should revert to the heirs of the

¹ These names were furnished me by Rev. J. J. Bronson. Another authority says Amos Keith and Lydia Thayer were of the original members, and omits the names of Hannah Clapp and Temperance White. Which is correct, we have been unable to learn. Both say there were thirteen members at its organization.

donor. Nathan Chapman was the second regular preacher, and was hired from April 1, 1838, till April 1, 1841. May 15, 1844, Samuel J. Carr was ordained as pastor. The sermon was preached by Rev. A. Bronson, of Fall River; the ordaining prayer, by Rev. B. C. Grafton, of Somerset; right hand, by H. C. Coombs, of Rehoboth. Mr. Carr remained only about a year after his ordination. Rev. John Holbrook was settled over the society, Dec. 7, 1845; and remained till April, 1848. Jan. 31, 1849, Rev. John G. Bowen was ordained as the minister. The sermon was by Rev. Rufus R. Babcock, of New Bedford; ordaining prayer, by Rev. E. H. Fuller, of Somerset; right hand, by Rev. S. J. Carr, of Mansfield. Mr. Bowen left "for the west," Sept. 29, 1849.

William Read commenced preaching to the society in April, 1850. He was ordained as pastor, Sept. 9, 1851. The sermon was by Rev. A. Pollard; ordaining prayer, by Rev. John Read, father of the candidate. Rev. S. A. Collins gave the right hand. Mr. Read remained pastor of the society till April 1, 1853. From that time, H. C. Coombs supplied about one year; S. A. Collins, about nine months; and transient preachers, the rest of the time till April, 1856; when Mr. John J. Bronson commenced a stated supply of the pulpit. He was born May 6, 1828, in Stratfield, Conn. He was ordained Dec. 3, 1856. The sermon was preached by his father, Rev. Asa Bronson, of Fall River; ordaining prayer, by Rev. B. W. Gardner, of Mansfield; right hand, by Rev. A. Pollard, of Taunton. Mr. Bronson remained as pastor till April 1, 1858.

In October, 1858, Henry F. H. Miller took charge of the church, and is now the pastor.

Soon after the church was organized, a Sunday school was gathered, which now numbers about seventy pupils. The number of volumes in the Sunday-school library is nearly three hundred.

We here give the names of those who have been ordained as deacons of the church: Tisdale Godfrey,

chosen April 7, 1836; Simeon Derry, chosen May 5, 1836; Ichabod Perry, chosen Oct. 10, 1844. Calvin Hunt and Dennis Field were chosen Sept. 4, 1851; and they are now (1858) the acting deacons of the church, — the first three named being dead.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TRINITARIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

"A trinity there seems of principles
Which represent and rule created life, —
The love of self, our fellows, and our God."

P. J. BAILEY.

THE one great event in Rev. Pitt Clarke's ministry — to which we have already alluded, and which caused him much grief — was the withdrawal, in 1832, — a little more than two years before his death, — of a portion of his church and parish, and the formation of another religious society. The following document seems to have been the first important step (of which there is any record) in the chain of events that led to the separation : —

"To the Church in Norton under the care of Revd. Pitt Clarke.

"DEAR FRIENDS, — We the Subscribers, members of your Body, — feeling for a time past much dissatisfied with the sentiments exhibited by our venerable Pastor, and believing it our solemn duty and our unquestionable right and privilege to maintain the great system of Evangelical Truth as understood by us and our Fathers, and to extend its influence over generations yet to come through the ordinances of divine appointment, — do hereby respectfully request a dismission from your Body, that we may be organized into a Church for the purpose of enjoying those privileges, which,

in our view, comport with the principles and precepts of the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

"This request is dictated by no feelings of ill-will to any one, but proceeds from a sense of duty to God, to ourselves, and to the cause of Christ.

"By complying with our request soon, you will much oblige yours. — March 7, 1832.

"LYSANDER MAKEPEACE.

JESSE BLANDIN.

JOHN PATTEN.

LEAVIT BATES.

NATHAN PERRY.

SARAH MAKEPEACE.

PHEBE PATTEN.

LYDIA SHEPARD.

NANCY M. PATTEN.

HANNAH BATES.

ELIZABETH BRIGGS."

"March 11th, 1832. — The chh. of Christ in Norton met, according to regular appointment, to hear the request of Lysander Makepeace and others, members of the chh., who ask a dismission that they may be organized into a separate chh.

"After mature deliberation upon this request, they expressed their unanimous opinion, that they could not sanction their dismission without some other reasons besides what they had already given.

"Voted unanimously to request them, by a committee, to state more definitely their reasons for a dismission, and the ground on which they wished to form a separate chh."

A committee was chosen to present to them a written address unanimously agreed upon by the church. It is as follows: —

"To Lysander Makepeace and others, members of our church, who request a dismission from us to be organized into a Separate church, the following vote of the church of Christ in Norton is respectfully submitted: —

"BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE LORD, — As you are in covenant with us, and we have promised to treat you with all that christian affection and watchfulness which your sacred relation to us requires, we feel it our duty, in answer to your request, to state the rule which Christ has laid down for the mutual government of his followers, and the obligations we are all under to proceed according to the order of the Gospel.

The plain rule of Christ is, if you have aught against your brother, first try to be reconciled by talking with him in private between you and him alone, and let him know distinctly what you have against him. If he will not hear you, then take with you one or two more, and thus try for a reconciliation. If, by these Gospel steps, you cannot be reconciled, then tell it to the church. We very much regret that these Gospel steps have not been taken.

“You say you have felt, for a time past, much dissatisfied with the sentiments exhibited by your Pastor, and believe it your solemn duty to maintain the great System of evangelical truth. We should have rejoiced if you had gone to him according to the rule of Christ, and let him know plainly what he has ever said contrary to evangelical truth. We have now a right to ask what particular sentiments he has exhibited in any of his preaching, which are contrary to the Gospel. Until we know this, we can form no correct judgment respecting it. As you have requested a dismissal from us to organize a separate church, before we can give our sanction to such a measure, we must have more substantial reasons than you have given, to think that such a division in this place will promote the cause of christ, who is the prince of peace, and entreats all to follow peace and holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. We have a right also to ask on what foundation different from us you wish to build your church, and whether in charity and christian fellowship with us or not. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Our Church was built, and now stands, on this gospel foundation; which is the foundation of the Apostles & Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. If you wish to build on any other foundation, we have a right to know it, before we can decide as to your request; For we cannot consent to your separating from the foundation of Christ, nor from that christian walk which you solemnly promised to maintain according to the ordinances of the Gospel, nor from that ground of mutual love and charity which we think to be the essence of true religion. We are earnestly desirous of promoting love and peace in the church, and good feeling and christian fellowship among all christian churches. We heartily unite in the prayer of our blessed Lord, that all his followers might be one, even as he & the Father are one, — one in spirit and temper, one in affection & design, one in fellowship & co-

operation in promoting the cause of Christ and good of souls.

“As to human and party names, we care to know nothing about them, any further than to know Jesus Christ, and him crucified, as set forth in the Gospel. We believe in God; we believe also in Christ. We believe, and are sure, that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son* of the living God; and that, believing in him, we may have life thro’ his name.

“We have been thus open & fair in stating the ground on which we stand as a church, and the Gospel order which we feel bound to maintain in relation to your request. We ask you, as christians, to be thus open & fair in stating the ground on which you wish to separate from us and form your church, that we may know how to act respecting it.

“These questions are the dictates of duty which we owe to ourselves, to our God, and to the cause of Christ; and they proceed from feelings of christian love towards you, who are united with us in the profession of the Gospel.

“As we state these questions in writing for your consideration, it is our request that your answers and reasons may be made plain and definite on paper, that we may have a fair understanding of them. We assure you that we will receive your reply in a candid manner, give a prayerful attention to whatever you may present before us, and, after mature deliberation, send you that result which we think the peace of the Church and the cause of true religion demand.

“Your Brothers in christian love & fellowship.

“ DANIEL LANE, EPHRAIM RAYMOND, STILLMAN SMITH,	}	Committee appointed by the Church.
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“ MARCH 11, 1832.”

In answer to this address, Deacon Makepeace sent the following communication:—

“ MARCH 19th, 1832.

“To the Church in Norton under the pastoral care of Rev. Pitt Clarke.

“DEAR BRETHREN,— We rec’d your letter of the 11th inst., in answer to our communication requesting a dismission for the purpose of forming ourselves into a new Church. I have conversed with most of them since, and I believe they

all think that the reasons we gave are sufficient to entitle us to a dismissal on the common and acknowledged principles and practices of christian liberty. They are reasons, which, in other towns, — and, if we mistake not, in Taunton, — were deemed sufficient to entitle members of Churches, in circumstances similar to ours, to a regular dismissal. We deem it unnecessary to reply to all the topics suggested in your letter ; as our feelings and objects are all known, we presume, to the whole church.

“ We now respectfully repeat the request in our last communication, with the hope and desire that we may, as soon as convenient, receive our dismissal ; and, if this cannot be granted, we wish to be informed accordingly.

“ We have no other than kind feelings to Mr. Clarke or the church.

“ With respect, yours, &c.,

“ L. MAKEPEACE.”

The church met, March 19, to hear the communication from the disaffected party ; and —

“ Voted, as the communication made to the chh. was only from one individual, and not authorized by the body of those who requested a dismissal, that they will adjourn to give them another opportunity to present any official communication, according to the request made at the last meeting. Voted, that Brother Stillman Smith [communicate] this vote.”

“ Friday, March 30th, 1832. — Met according to adjournment. No further communication was made from those who wished for a dismissal. As the chh. had not been presented with sufficient reasons for granting their dismissal, nor any statement of the ground on which they wished to build their chh., whether in charity and christian fellowship or not, they could not consistantly act any further upon it.

“ As the feelings of some of them were hurt because the address from the chh. to them was read to the congregation, and their request was not read with it, the chh. Voted, that, if they desire it, their first petition, and all the proceedings of the chh. respecting it, shall be read to the whole congregation. Voted also, that Stillman Smith communicate this vote.”

We find no further action of the church with reference to the petitioners for dismissal. We think they should have been dismissed according to their request.

I am told by Deacon Stillman Smith, — one of the committee to confer with them, — that one, and perhaps the more weighty, reason why their desire was not granted, was because it was thought, if they were regularly dismissed for the purpose of forming a new society, that the society they organized would legally be entitled to their just proportion of the *Parish Fund*.

This would not have been the result: but the church feared it might be; and therefore, for this and the other reasons given, they felt constrained not to grant the request of Deacon Makepeace and his associates.

The seceding members were organized under the title of the *Trinitarian Congregational Church*, April 3, 1832, by an ecclesiastical council; in which were represented the two Trinitarian churches of Taunton, the church in North Bridgewater, and the church in Raynham. The sermon on the occasion was by Rev. Daniel Huntington, of North Bridgewater. The confession of faith and covenant — which are still unaltered — were as follows: —

“ CONFESSION OF FAITH.

“ART. 1. We believe in the existence of but one God, — the Creator, Upholder, and Governor of all worlds and all beings, — and that He is unchangably possessed, in the highest degree, of all perfections, natural and moral.

“ART. 2. We believe that there is a Trinity of Persons, — the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, — whose *mysterious* union is such as to constitute them but one God.

“ART. 3. We believe that Jesus Christ, though ‘God over all, blessed for ever,’ was manifested in the flesh, and died on the cross to make atonement for sin; and that there is ‘no other name given under Heaven whereby we may be saved.’

“ART. 4. We believe that the Holy Ghost was sent down from Heaven to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness,

and of judgment, and for the renewal and sanctification of God's people.

"ART. 5. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are of Divine authority, and are the only perfect rule of faith and practice.

"ART. 6. We believe that all men are by nature destitute of holiness; and therefore, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.

"ART. 7. We believe that the offers of life and salvation are freely made to all; and he that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, and he that believeth not shall be punished with everlasting destruction.

"ART. 8. We believe that there will be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.

"ART. 9. We believe that there will be a day of Judgment, in which all shall receive according to the deeds done in the body.

"ART. 10. We believe that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is appointed for those, and those only, who truly believe and give credible evidence of a renewed heart, and profess faith in Christ; and that such have a right to the ordinance of Baptism for their households."

"THE COVENANT.

"For the maintenance of these doctrines which you receive on the authority of God's word, and for the cultivation of those Christian affections which you humbly hope the Holy Ghost has implanted within you, you do now publicly avouch the Lord Jehovah to be your God and portion, and the object of your supreme love and adoration; the Lord Jesus Christ to be your Savior from sin and death; and the Holy Ghost to be your Sanctifier, Comforter, and guide; humbly imploring Divine assistance that you may be enabled to observe all the commandments and ordinances of God as revealed in the Gospel. You also bind yourself to this Church; promising to watch over us in the Lord, to seek our peace and edification, and to submit to the government and discipline of Christ in his Church as it is here administered. This you promise and covenant to do? (The candidate here gives his assent.)

"This Church, then, receive you as a member in full communion, and declare you entitled to all its privileges;

covenanting to watch over you in brotherly love, beseech the aid of Divine grace, that we may exhort, comfort, and admonish one another as our future circumstances may require, and that we may be enabled to walk together in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

To this confession of faith and covenant, twenty-two persons solemnly gave their assent; viz., Nathan Perry, Leavit Bates, Hannah Bates, Lysander Makepeace, Sarah Makepeace, John Patten, Nancy Patten, Phebe Patten, Lydia Shepard, Elizabeth Briggs, Rhoda Lothrop, Jesse Blandin, Laban M. Wheaton, Eliza B. Wheaton, Josiah King, Clarissa King, Mason Stone, Abigail M. Stone, Harriet Patten, Polly Goodwin, Allen Tucker, Emma Field.

Previously to this, various persons had been employed to preach; among whom, for occasional sabbaths, were Dr. Lyman Beecher, of Boston; and Dr. R. S. Storrs, of Braintree. Rev. John West, of the Episcopal Church in Taunton, had also held a service for three months, the season before, on the afternoon of each sabbath. After the organization, the ministers of the association preached each of them a sabbath; and, soon after, Rev. Spencer F. Beard was engaged as a permanent supply. The meetings at this time were held in the hall of the public-house.

The first object of the new church was to erect a house of worship; and measures were immediately taken to effect it. Subscriptions were raised in town, and some assistance received from individuals and churches in other towns, and the building commenced; but it was not till Jan. 1, 1834, that it was finished, and ready to be dedicated. Rev. R. S. Storrs, of Braintree, preached the dedicatory sermon from Isa. xxxii. 1, 2; and Rev. Mr. Maltby, of Taunton, offered the consecrating prayer.

The church, by this time, had received considerable accession to its numbers, and henceforth went on to prosper.

Rev. Mr. Beard's engagement terminated early the following year (1835); and, on the 24th of April

succeeding, a call was extended to Rev. Cyrus W. Allen to become the pastor. He accepted the invitation, and was installed July 8.

In 1836, the meeting-house was enlarged about one-third of its original size.

March 1, 1842, Rev. Mr. Allen was dismissed at his own request.¹ Early in July following, Rev. Homer Barrows was engaged to supply the pulpit. His ministry continued three years, much to the acceptance of the church and people, who twice invited him to settle as their pastor,—first in March, 1843; and again in February, 1845: but, on both occasions, he declined settling.

He was succeeded by Rev. William Barrows, who was called May 26, and ordained Sept. 4, 1845. Mr. Barrows was dismissed June 4, 1850.²

More than a year now elapsed before calling another pastor, during which time a decided advance was made,

¹ Rev. Mr. Allen was born in Taunton, Oct. 28, 1806; graduated at Brown University in 1826, and from the Andover Theological Seminary in 1829. He was subsequently employed as an agent of the American Tract Society, in Illinois and Missouri, for about three years. Then, for about two years, he resided at Potosi, Mo.; having the charge of two churches. He was ordained at St. Louis, Oct. 6, 1833. Since leaving Norton, he has been the pastor of a church at Pelham, N.H.; Coleraine, Mass.; and is now settled at Hubbardston. June 6, 1837, he married Miss Mary Folger, of Nantucket; and has had eight children.

² Rev. Mr. Barrows was born in New Braintree, Sept. 19, 1815; and was the son of William and Asenath (Osborn) Barrows. He fitted for college at Phillips Academy, Andover; graduated at Amherst in 1840; and studied theology at the Union Seminary, New-York City. While a resident of Norton, Mr. Barrows took a deep interest in the public schools, and conferred a lasting good upon the rising generation, by insisting, in the face of much opposition, upon a uniformity of text-books in the schools. In the presidential contest of 1848, he voted for Gen. Taylor; which led to difficulties between him and his parish (most of them being of the "Liberty Party"), and, finally, to his dismission. He says, in a note to me, "My leaving Norton was not of my choice, till painful circumstances made it evident duty." The Sunday following his dismission, he preached an able sermon on "MINISTERIAL FREEDOM;" which was printed, and is well worthy of perusal by those who love "liberty" in practice as well as theory. Since leaving Norton, he has been pastor of a church at Grantville, and at Reading, where he now resides. He married, July 7, 1845, Miss Lucia A. Case, of Blandford; and had two children by her. She died suddenly, Dec. 6, 1847. Oct. 24, 1849, he married, for second wife, Miss Elizabeth A. Cate, of Cambridge; and has had three children by her. She was a native of Pembroke, N.H.; and was Principal of the Wheaton Female Seminary, in this town, from April 19, 1847, to July 25, 1849, and did much to elevate the character of the school while connected with it.

among other things, in securing to the society, by donation and purchase, the possession of the pews in the house of worship. Thenceforth it was arranged that the public service should be sustained by their rent; thus disposing of a question which had caused trouble in each succeeding pastorate, and providing for the salary without the formidable appearance of a subscription. The organ was given at this time by a lady of the church; as the bell had also been, in earlier years, by another.

July 31, 1851, a call was extended to Rev. L. S. Parker; which was declined.

March 20, 1852, another was given, to Rev. Franklin Holmes; which was accepted, — the ordination taking place the 15th of September following. He is still the pastor.¹

The sabbath school connected with this society numbers about seventy pupils. The number of volumes in the Sunday-school library is five hundred twenty-seven.

Upon the subjects of temperance and slavery, the opinion and feeling of the church have been frequently expressed. Soon after its organization, a vote was passed that no person should be admitted who should not first signify his assent to the temperance pledge. Deacon Lysander Makepeace² and John Patten were

¹ Rev. Mr. Holmes is the son of Peter and Olive G. Holmes, and was born in West Boylston, March 26, 1823.

He graduated at Yale College in 1846, and from the Andover Theological Seminary in 1852.

Aug. 6, 1855, he married Miss Martha C. Sawyer, of Charlestown; and has two children.

² Deacon Makepeace was the son of Peter and Abigail (Morey) Makepeace; grandson of William and Experience (Aldrich) Makepeace; great-grandson of William and Abigail (Tisdale) Makepeace, of Taunton and Freetown; great-great-grandson of William and Ann (Johnson) Makepeace, of Freetown and Boston; and great-great-great-grandson of Thomas Makepeace, who came from England, and was at Boston in 1637, — whose wife (married about 1641) was Widow Elizabeth Mellows; and he was born Aug. 22, 1771.*

Previous to the formation of the Trinitarian Society, he had been many years deacon of the Congregational Church (see p. 218). He was four

* For more particulars of his pedigree, see a Genealogy of the Makepeace Families, by William Makepeace, Esq., of Boston.

the first deacons. Deacon Makepeace resigned during the ministry of Mr. Allen; and Mr. Seabury Thayer, resident of Taunton, was chosen his successor. Deacon Patten resigned Jan. 3, 1850; and, on that day, Jesse H. Blandin was chosen to fill the vacancy. He and Mr. Thayer are the present deacons.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WESLEYAN-METHODIST SOCIETY.

"On account of the rigidity with which its people adhered to method in the observance of religious duties, they were first derisively called Methodists." — WILLIAM R. CLARK.

IN May, 1849, a few persons — members of the Reformed Methodist Church at Rehoboth, encouraged and assisted by others — commenced a Wesleyan-Methodist meeting at Barrowsville, and employed the Rev. David Culver as their minister. The following winter, a meeting-house was erected by donation, in which the slips were to be rented yearly for the support of preaching.

In April, 1850, Rev. Solomon P. Snow began his labors among them; and, on the 3d of May, a church was organized, which adopted the Wesleyan-Methodist discipline. It consisted of ten members, as follows: Rev. S. P. Snow, Maria J. Snow, Joseph Snow, Nancy Snow, David Cummings, Roxellana R. Cummings, Albert S. Tucker, Abigail Tucker, Jonathan J. Stanley, Polly Jones.

years a selectman of the town, and two years a tithing-man. He married Sarah Wild, Sept. 11, 1794; and had twelve children. She died June 21, 1842; and he married, for second wife, Mrs. Eunice Sweet, April 18, 1847. He died Jan. 24, 1859.

We had the promise of his lithograph for these pages, and regret that it has not been furnished.

Their house was dedicated to the worship of God on the 8th of May, with appropriate services, by Rev. J. W. Horton, of Taunton; Rev. William H. Brewster, of Lowell; Rev. G. Clark, of Attleborough; and Rev. S. P. Snow, the pastor. Rev. Mr. Snow continued his labors as pastor until April, 1854; when Lewis P. Atwood, a licentiate, was engaged to labor with them one year. In April, 1855, Rev. John A. Gibson commenced his labors among them. He remained till April, 1858; and was succeeded by Rev. James Dixon, the present pastor.¹

There is a Sunday school connected with this church, of nearly sixty scholars; and a library of about five hundred volumes.

The Wesleyan-Methodist connection originated in a secession from the Methodist-Episcopal Church on account of slavery and church-government, and differs from them principally in the following particulars:—

In the Methodist-Episcopal Church, slaveholders, and the makers, venders, and drinkers of intoxicating liquors, are allowed to be members. Three orders in the ministry are practically recognized. The entire government of the church is in the hands of the ministry. There is but one church throughout the United States.

The Wesleyan Methodists exclude from membership all slaveholders and apologists for slavery, and all distillers, dealers, and drinkers of ardent spirits. They acknowledge but one order in the ministry. Laity, as well as ministry, take part in the government of the church; and the churches in different localities are distinct churches.

¹ There are some Methodists who reside in the north-easterly part of the town, and attend meeting at one of the Methodist churches at East Mansfield.

There are also some Nortonians who attend meeting at the Christian Church in West Mansfield; and Jason F. Alden, of this town, is one of the deacons of that church.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

COLLEGIATE HISTORY.

"Oh, this learning! — what a thing it is!" — SHAKESPEARE.

IN this chapter, we give a short notice of the graduates of college who were born in Norton, or spent a portion of their early years here. Where no place of birth is mentioned, it is to be understood that they were born within the present limits of the town. We have abbreviated a few words that are often repeated: viz., H.U., Harvard University; B.U., Brown University; D.C., Dartmouth College; Y.C., Yale College; grad., graduated. We have been obliged to condense these sketches more than we originally intended.

Rev. NATHANIEL LEONARD (grad. H.U. 1719) was the first graduate from this town. He was the son of Major George and Anna (Tisdale) Leonard; and was born March 9, 1700. He was called to settle as pastor of the First Church in Plymouth, Feb. 13, 1724; and was ordained on the 29th of July following. On account of ill health, he resigned in the spring of 1756; and in June, 1757, he removed with his family to Norton, and resided at Barrowsville till his death, June 11, 1761. The slab that covers his grave is sunk almost beneath the surface of the earth. Oct. 22, 1724, he married Miss Priscilla Rogers, of Ipswich, by whom he had sixteen children. "He was a gentleman more inclined to the active than the studious life, but should be remembered for his useful services as a minister, and for his exemplary life and conversation."¹

Rev. SAMUEL VEAZIE (grad. H.U. 1736) was the

¹ History of Plymouth.

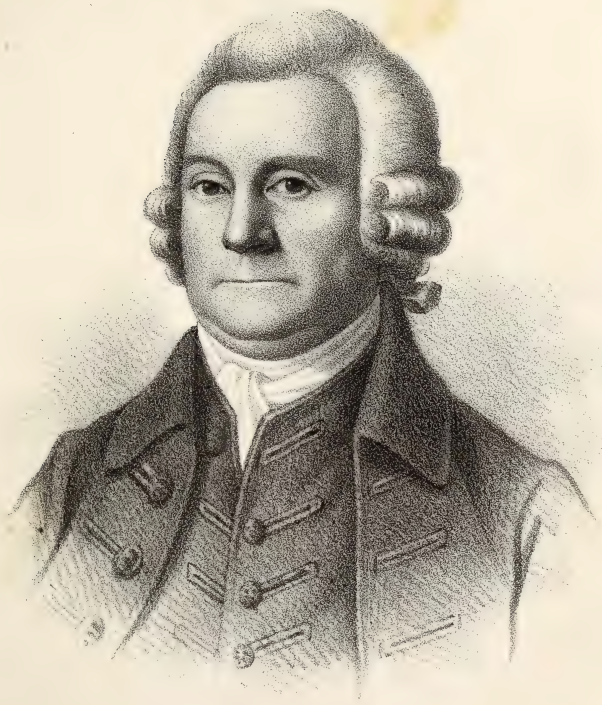
son of Samuel and Deborah (?) Veazie, and is supposed to have been born at Braintree, Jan. 8, 1711. His father resided at Norton at the time he entered college, and for some years subsequent to his graduation. He married, Aug. 6, 1742, Deborah Sampson; and had two or more children. Oct. 31, 1739, he was ordained at Duxbury. During the Whitefield revival, he became a convert to the "new-light" doctrines, which caused dissatisfaction in his church, and finally led to his dismissal, April 18, 1750. He was settled at Hull, April 12, 1753; and died Dec. 3, 1797, — one account says at Hull;¹ another, at Brunswick.² For further account of him and some anecdotes, we refer the reader to the "History of Duxbury."

Hon. GEORGE LEONARD, LL.D. (grad. H.U. 1748), was the son of Col. George and Rachel (Clap) Leonard; and was born July 4, 1729. He studied law, and established himself in his profession at Norton. He married, Nov. 27, 1759, Experience, daughter of Hon. Samuel White, of Taunton; and had two daughters. Until the death of his father, he resided at the house on the high ground beyond his father's. He subsequently occupied the old paternal mansion, a picture of which we have given on page 86. Mr. Leonard held more and important offices than any other citizen of Norton; having been Register of Probate, a Royal Councillor, Judge of Probate, Judge, and Chief-Judge of the Court of Common Pleas; Representative to Congress, State Senator, Representative to General Court, Moderator of Town-meetings, Town-clerk and Treasurer, Selectman and Assessor, a Colonel in the militia, &c.³ He died July 26, 1819. Rev. Pitt Clarke, who knew him intimately, says he "was a lively pattern of those regular and virtuous habits, which, in general, are a pledge of a long life." On the probate-books at Taunton, vol. lvi. p. 85, &c., immediately following his

¹ History of Duxbury.

² Winthrop's Interleaved Triennial Catalogue.

³ See Chapter XX.



L. Grozelier Lith. Boston.

George Leonard jun^r

will, is a long notice of him, supposed to have been written by Hon. Frank Baylies, then Register of Probate. From it we learn that he was a genuine specimen of an American country gentleman, who thought he had other duties to perform besides adding to a mass of wealth more than sufficient for all rational purposes of life. He was a kind and considerate landlord, and would never raise his rents, regarding his old tenants as his friends. His manners were simple, mild, and affable. He was tenaciously attached to old customs, and wore the short breeches and long stockings to the day of his death, looking with disdain upon new fashions and modern innovations. He would never rear merino sheep on his farm, sell his growing rye for the straw-manufacture, allow cotton-mills to be erected on his streams, or speculate in stocks. He ever regarded agriculture as the noblest employment of man. He was strongly attached to the clergy and to men of letters; in all his business transactions, was governed by the principles of rigid integrity; and, during his long life, was never guilty of injustice or oppression. He was a man of sound judgment, practical common sense, consummate prudence, and unwavering firmness. Few men ever received more general respect in any community, or deserved it more, than he. Well can it be said of him, "The memory of the just is blessed."

Rev. ABIEL LEONARD, D.D. (grad. H.U. 1759), was the son of Rev. Nathaniel Leonard, already noticed; and was born at Plymouth, Nov. 5, 1740. At the time of his graduation, his father was a resident of this town; and, of course, the son was also legally a resident. He was ordained pastor of the Congregational Society at Woodstock, Conn., June 23, 1763. At his ordination, £10.16s. were expended for liquor, sugar, and lemons; so that the affair must have gone off with a good deal of *spirit*! Previous to his settlement, he married a Miss Huntington, of Norwich. She soon died, leaving one daughter. His second wife was a sister of Gov. Greene, of Rhode Island, by whom he had five children. In May, 1775, through the influence of

Gen. Putnam, he was appointed chaplain of one of the Connecticut regiments, which he soon joined with the consent of his parish. I have in my possession a copy of a letter dated "Head-Quarters, Cambridge, 24th of March, 1776," signed by Generals Washington and Putnam, and supposed to have been written by the former, in which Mr. Leonard, and his usefulness in the army, are spoken of in the most flattering terms. He continued with the army till the autumn of 1777; when, either with or without cause, he was dismissed from his position as chaplain, and, on his way home, committed suicide at Danbury, Conn. It is supposed that mortification, on account of his dismissal, made him insane. He was a man of great ambition, fond of popularity and applause, but was greatly beloved by the people of Woodstock. He was a large, fine-looking, remarkably handsome man, an eloquent speaker, and an accomplished gentleman.

Rev. SAMUEL DEAN, D.D. (grad. H.U. 1760), was the son of Deacon Samuel and Rachel (Dwight) Dean, and is believed to have been born in Dedham (during a temporary residence of his father there), Aug. 30, 1733.¹ While quite young, his father returned to Norton (see Deacons of Cong. Church). The grandfather of Dr. Dean was Samuel, who was the son of John, who was the son of the immigrant John who came from Chard, England, in 1636, and, in 1638, settled at Taunton. From 1760 to 1762, Mr. Dean was Librarian of Harvard University; and, in 1763, was a tutor there. He was ordained at Falmouth (now Portland), Me., a colleague with Thomas Smith, Oct. 17, 1764. He received the degree of D.D. from B.U. in 1790. He married, in 1766, Eunice Pearson, but had no children. He died Nov. 12, 1814; having kept a diary fifty-three years. Dr. Dean was tall and portly, of good personal appearance, of grave and dignified manners. He was possessed of keen wit; very

¹ See History of Dean Family, Genealogical Register, vol. iii. p. 385. Another authority says he was born July 10, 1733.

social and agreeable in conversation. "His style of preaching was calm, and without much animation. He aimed more to convince the understanding than to alarm the fears or arouse the passions."¹

Hon. DANIEL LEONARD (grad. H.U. 1760) was the son of Hon. Ephraim and Judith (Perkins) Leonard, of the North Precinct of Norton; and was born May 18, 1740. He was a practising lawyer for some years at Taunton, and a man of fine talents; but, in an evil hour, he fell under the fascinating influence of Gov. Hutchinson, and became a loyalist. He was appointed a mandamus councillor in 1774; and was finally obliged to flee from the infuriated populace that surrounded his house at "Taunton Green," and only his previous popularity saved him from personal indignities. He was the author of the articles signed "*Massachusettsensis*," published on the eve of the Revolution, in Draper's paper, at Boston. From Boston he went to Halifax; thence to England; and was subsequently Chief-Justice of the Bermuda Islands, which office he held for many years. He afterwards returned to England, and died in London, June 27, 1829, in consequence of wounds received by the accidental bursting of a pistol in his hands. He married, April 2, 1767, Anna, daughter of Hon. Samuel White, of Taunton. His second wife was Sarah Hammock. He had one son, Charles;² and several daughters. Mr. Leonard had a great love of display in dress and equi-

¹ A more extended account of him, and also his lithograph, may be seen in Smith and Dean's journals, with notes of Portland by William Willis.

² Ephraim Leonard, the father of Daniel (a copy of whose will may be seen in vol. i. p. 165 of the Records of the Supreme Judicial Court of Probate, at Boston, in the office of the Clerk of the Supreme Judicial Court), bequeathed most of his large estate to his son, provided he should be allowed to return and enjoy it, and also be allowed the rights of citizenship; but, if not, then the estate was to go to any of Daniel's children who should come to America and become citizens. Charles did come, and received the property, and, about 1791, entered Harvard College, but did not graduate. He was subsequently under the guardianship of Judge Wheaton; and finally was found dead in the road near Barrowsville, May 4, 1831. His death is supposed to have been caused by an excessive draught of liquor.

page, but was of a "generous temper and affable manners."

Rev. EPHRAIM BRIGGS (grad. H.U. 1764) was the son of Richard and Abigail (Andrews) Briggs, (grandson of Richard, one of the first settlers of Norton); and was born, April 19, 1736, in the North Precinct. He was ordained pastor of the Congregational Society in Halifax, April 29, 1767. He was a useful and respectable man. His wife was Rebecca Waterman, by whom he had six sons, five of whom were graduates of college and settled ministers of the gospel. He died Dec. 22, 1799.

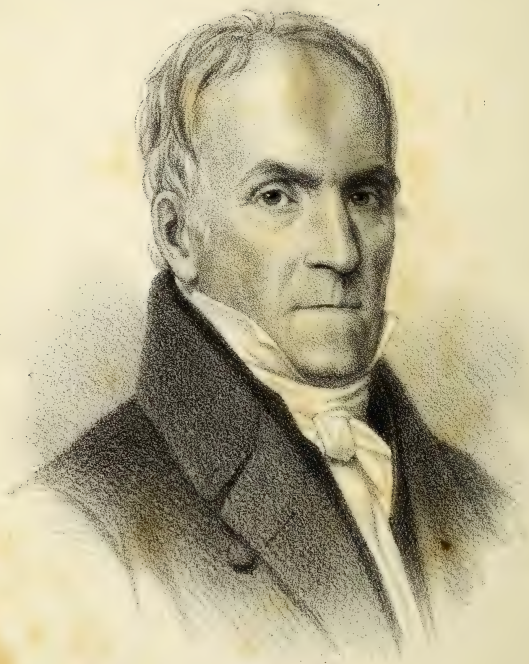
Hon. DANIEL NEWCOMB (grad. H.U. 1768) was the son of Jonathan and Mercy (Everett) Newcomb; and was born in the Mansfield part of Norton, April 19, 1747. In 1778, he commenced the practice of law at Keene, N.H., and was an eminent counsellor. In 1781, he was a delegate from Keene to the convention for "forming a plan of Government" for New Hampshire. He was appointed Chief-Judge of the Inferior Court of Cheshire County, N.H., in September, 1790; but resigned his office in the course of a year or two. He was twice a member of the New-Hampshire State Senate. He was at one time quite wealthy; but died poor, on the 14th of July, 1818. He had a large and expensive family. He was much interested in education; and, at his own cost, established what was afterwards called the "Grammar School" at Keene.¹

Dr. THOMAS LEONARD (grad. H.U. 1769) was the son of Rev. Nathaniel Leonard; and was born at Plymouth, April 26, 1744, but lived with his father in Norton for some years previous to his entering college. In Winthrop's "Interleaved Triennial," he is said to have been a physician, and that he died June 28, 1771; but where he died, we are not informed.

Rev. GEORGE WHEATON (grad. H.U. 1769) was the son of Dr. George and Elizabeth (Morey) Wheaton;

¹ For more particulars of him, see *Annals of Keene, N.H.*, by Hon. Salma Hale.





Lith By L. Gröndle

Laban Wheaton

and was born in the North Precinct, July 6, 1751. He was ordained pastor of the Congregational Society at Claremont, N.H., Feb. 19, 1772. He died at his father's house, in Mansfield, June 24, 1773. He bequeathed to the town of Claremont all his real estate in the town, and also what was due him there, to be used in support of a Congregational minister. He was buried at Mansfield; and the town of Claremont erected the monument over his grave,¹ which says, —

“His genius was bright and promising; his private conversation pleasing and instructive; his publick performances devout, manly, and graceful.

“The new Country in which he settled opened a wide field for his useful Labors, In which his readiness to oblige, & fervent zeal for his Master's Cause, urged him beyond ye strength of his Constitution, & brought on the illness of which he died.”

NATHAN MOREY (grad. H.U. 1774) was the son of Thomas and Lydia (White) Morey; and was born Dec. 5, 1747. He was a chaplain in the Revolutionary war, but was never settled as a minister. In the autumn of 1777, or the winter of 1778, he and his half-brother Lewis (then a member of Yale College) went on a privateering expedition; but were taken by the British, carried to Halifax, and put on board a prison-ship; where, having suffered greatly, he died previous to March 26, 1778, when his will was probated at Taunton. He studied divinity with Rev. Mr. Barnum, of Taunton; and married Mary Price (a sister of Mrs. Barnum), “a stale virgin with a wintry face,” but left no issue.

HON. LABAN WHEATON (grad. H.U. 1774) was a brother of Rev. George, already noticed; and was born, March 13, 1754, in the North Precinct (?). He prepared for college at the Wrentham Academy; and, after graduating at the university, studied theology with Rev. Abiel Leonard, of Woodstock, Conn. He

¹ Massachusetts Gazette and News-letter, Oct. 14, 1773.

preached at sundry places ; and was at Framingham about four years, where he was invited to settle, but declined so to do. He then entered into mercantile pursuits in connection with a classmate, with whom he was connected three or four years, when the firm became bankrupt. When more than thirty years old, he commenced the study of law with Mr. Kent, of Watertown ; and, on the completion of his legal studies, opened an office in Milton. In 1788, he removed to his native town, and had here a very extensive practice ; and, with the most rigid economy, acquired a large fortune. He was a man of great intellectual power, deeply versed in legal knowledge, and applied himself most assiduously to his professional duties ; standing for many years at the head of the Bar in Bristol County, and doing much business in the courts of neighboring counties. He was eight years a Member of Congress ; also Chief-Justice of the Court of Common Pleas and of the Court of Sessions ; several times a Representative to the State Legislature ; and otherwise much employed in offices of trust and responsibility by his townsmen (see Official History). June 1, 1794, he married Fanny Morey (his cousin), and had four children, two of whom died young. Soon after the death of his daughter (Mrs. Strong, of Boston), in 1834, he conceived the idea of establishing (with the portion of his estate he had designed to give her) a female seminary ; and soon after founded the school at Norton which now bears his name, and appointed a Board of Trustees, of which he was chosen chairman, and held that position till he died, March 23, 1846, at the advanced age of ninety-two years and ten days.¹

ISAAC HALL, Esq. (grad. H.U. 1775), was the son of Brian Hall ; and was born in Boston, Aug. 16, 1753 (?). His father moved to Norton before Isaac entered college, and ever after resided here. Mr. Hall studied law, and died soon after entering upon his professional

¹ For more particulars of him, see Funeral Sermon by Rev. Sylvester Holmes.

career. His tombstone, in the "common graveyard," informs us that he was an attorney-at-law, and that he died Dec. 14, 1779, aged twenty-six. In the "Providence Gazette" of Jan. 29, 1780, may be seen a notice of him, which says, "His learning, abilities as a lawyer, and strict adherence to the principles of virtue, rendered him dear to his friends, an honor to his profession, and highly esteemed by all his acquaintance."

Rev. JAMES BRIGGS (grad. Y.C. 1775) was the son of Deacon James and Damaris (White) Briggs, already noticed; and was born Jan. 17, 1745. His father, being a Baptist (and the son not adopting those notions), declined to assist him in acquiring an education; and therefore he was thrown upon his own resources. He is believed to have worked at blacksmithing till he was able to meet the expenses of a liberal education. He was settled the first minister of the Congregational Church in Cummington, July 7, 1779; and is supposed to have preached there some two years previous to his ordination. I have been able to learn but little respecting him. He is said to have been "a very useful and respectable minister." He married, Oct. 19, 1780, Anna Wiswall, of this town, by whom he had children; and one of his grand-daughters, Miss C. A. Briggs, is the author of a volume of poems, and is now the wife of Charles Mason, Esq., of Fitchburg. He died Dec. 7, 1825.

Rev. GEORGE MOREY (grad. H.U. 1776) was the son of George, jun., and Mary (Hodges) Morey; and was born Dec. 18, 1750.¹ After completing his theological studies, he received invitation to settle at Hanover, Mass., and Oxford, N.H.; which he declined. He was ordained a Congregational minister at Walpole, Nov. 19, 1783; where his labors continued till May 21, 1826, when he retired from the active duties of his office. He married, June 22, 1784, Anna Palmer, of this town, daughter of the second minister; by whom

¹ Town-records. In his Funeral Sermon, it is stated that he was born "Dec. 18, 1749, old style."

he had six children. For second wife, he married, n October, 1818, "Widow Joan Gay." During his ministry, "he was never detained by sickness from the services of the Sabbath more than once, and then by a hoarse cold merely. His mind was strong; his talents were of the useful kind; while his judgment of men and things was excellent." He died July 26, 1829.¹

Dr. SAMUEL MOREY (grad. Y.C. 1777: see Physicians).

Rev. JOHN CRANE, D.D. (grad. H.U. 1780), was the son of John and Rachel (Terry) Crane (who were Friends); and was born March 26, 1756. He studied theology with the celebrated Dr. Emmons, of Franklin. In 1782, he commenced preaching at Northbridge, and was ordained there as the first Congregational minister, June 25, 1783, where he remained till March 14, 1832, when he resigned his pastoral relations, but was nominally pastor till his death, Aug. 31, 1836. He married Rachel Taft, and had three children. His mind was strong, penetrating, and well cultivated. In addition to his clerical duties, he carried on a farm, taught school many years in his own house, and assisted in preparing more than one hundred young men for college; wrote about four thousand sermons, and preached about two hundred extemporaneous ones. For several years, he represented Northbridge in the General Court.²

JACOB WHITE (grad. H.U. 1780) was the son of Isaac and Hannah (Hewes) White, of the North Precinct; grandson of Deacon Nicholas White; and was born July 31, 1757. The first part of his collegiate course was spent at Yale; but he left there at the close of his junior year. He died of consumption, at Mansfield, July 19, 1785.

CALVIN CRANE (grad. D.C. 1785) was the brother of Rev. John Crane; and was born May 13, 1764.

¹ For further notice, see Funeral Sermon by Rev. Daniel C. Sanders.

² See Blake's History of the Mendon Association.

He studied theology with Rev. Mr. Judson, of Taunton, but was never ordained. In the spring of 1787, he was appointed tutor of his alma mater, and assumed the duties of his office in May of that year, with the privilege of preaching as he had opportunity; but a pulmonic disease compelled him, in the autumn of the same year, to seek a milder climate. He arrived at Charleston, S.C., Nov. 21; but he continued to fail till Dec. 26, 1787, when death claimed its victim. He was never married.

Rev. MASE SHEPARD (grad. D.C. 1785) was the son of Thomas and Content (White) Shepard; and was born May 28, 1759. He was the grandson of Jacob and Mercy (Chickering) Shepard, who settled within the present limits of Foxborough about 1703; great-grandson of Thomas and Hannah (Ensign) Shepard, of Malden.¹ Mr. Shepard fitted for college with Rev. William Conant, of Lyme, N.H.; and studied theology with Rev. E. Judson, of Taunton. He was ordained pastor of the Congregational Church at Little Compton, R.I., Sept. 19, 1797; where, after an efficient ministry of thirty-three years, he died, Feb. 14, 1821. He married, July 6, 1788, Deborah Haskins, of Boston, and had nine children. His early years were spent in manual labor on a farm. He was a man of commanding presence, powerful voice, and distinguished for the interest which he won in the affections of all classes of the community in social conversation. He was not a close student, but excelled in his pastoral visits, and in his appeals from the pulpit, which were extemporaneous.²

Dr. OLIVER TIFFANY (grad. D.C. 1786) was the son of Dr. Gideon Tiffany, already noticed; and was born June 24, 1763. "He was a pleasant, amiable young man, but not distinguished as a scholar." He studied medicine at Philadelphia, Virginia, and Massachusetts, and became quite eminent in his profession. He lo-

¹ Letter of L. M. Boltwood, Esq.

² American Quarterly Register, vol. xii.

cated at Ancaster, Canada West, where he became very wealthy; and died, unmarried, May 7, 1835.

Hon. GEORGE TIFFANY (grad. D.C. 1786) was a brother of the preceding; and was born June 20, 1765. He studied law at Albany, N.Y.; and became a pioneer practitioner at Schoharie, N.Y., where he resided many years. Previous to entering upon his professional duties, he taught school at Providence, R.I.; and, with his brother Oliver, had charge of the first academy at Albany, N.Y. He held the office of commissioner and State senator of New York, and a colonel of cavalry. He married Polly Frize (?), and had eight children. Having been some years a widower, he removed to his brother Oliver's at Ancaster, C.W.; where he died, Jan. 3, 1842.

OLIVER LEONARD, Esq. (grad. B.U. 1787), was the son of Jonathan and Eleanor (Cambell) Leonard; half-brother of Hon. Cromwell Leonard (see Official History); and was born Feb. 3, 1764. After graduating, he kept store a year or two, near where Mr. Rogerson's store now is; and is believed to have set out the large elms in front of Mr. Rogerson's store, about 1789. He studied law with Judge Paddleford, of Taunton, and Stephen Dexter, of Newport, R.I.; and was admitted to the bar in 1791, and soon commenced practice at Taunton, where he remained three or four years. From thence he went to Orrington, Me., where he did an immense legal business. He subsequently took up his residence at Bangor, on the opposite side of the river to Orrington. He was a representative in our Legislature several times while Maine was a district of Massachusetts; and was a man of fine talents and an interesting debater, but rather extravagant in his style of living. In June, 1797, while attempting to force open his own house, — which had been taken possession of by an Irishman, — two balls and a large wad were shot through his body, but did not cause his death. He married, in 1797, Mrs. Sarah Fletcher, of Newport, R.I. (whose first husband, William Fletcher, was a surgeon in one

of the British regiments in the Revolution); and died childless, Jan. 3, 1828.

Rev. JOHN BRIGGS (grad. B.U. 1788) is supposed to have been the son of Simeon and Mary (Cheney) Briggs; grandson of Deacon John Briggs, "the eldest," one of the first settlers here; and was born May 17, 1765. He was ordained a Congregational minister at Tiverton, R.I., Dec. 7, 1791; and was dismissed from his pastoral relations there, Oct. 21, 1801. Dec. 2, 1801, he was settled at Plympton, and continued there six years and a half. Subsequently he removed to Vermont (another account says New Hampshire), and settled upon a farm; where he died, Sept. 18, 1811.¹

Rev. STEPHEN PALMER (grad. H.U. 1789) was the son of Rev. Joseph and Sarah (Eames) Palmer; and was born Oct. 8, 1766. During his early years, he suffered much from sickness. Two or three times, his life was despaired of; and once the family were informed that he was dead. In 1782, he broke his arm badly, which left him with a stiff elbow. This circumstance, and his previous feeble health, caused his father to consent to his seeking for a liberal education. He commenced fitting for college, May 15, 1784, at Wrentham, under the tuition of H. Townsend; and finished his preparatory studies with Rev. Mr. Haven, of Dedham. In his autobiography, — from which I have taken most of the materials for this notice, — he says, "I passed the four years at college without receiving any public censure; and, through the restraints of Divine Goodness, without any stain upon my moral character." Until the death of his father, he studied theology with him, and thenceforth alone. His first sermon was preached July 24, 1791, in the pulpit of his uncle, Rev. Mr. Ellis, of Rehoboth. He preached as a candidate at Attleborough (where he was invited to settle), Norton, and Needham; and received an invitation to settle in the latter place, June 11, 1792;

¹ American Quarterly Register, vol. xii. p. 268, and vol. viii. p. 157.

which he accepted, after about eight weeks' deliberation. Oct. 17 was set apart as the day of ordination; but, on account of the prevalency of the small-pox in the town, the ordination did not take place till Nov. 7, 1792. He continued his pastoral relations with the society till he died, Oct. 31, 1821, — just thirty years and one day after preaching his first sermon to the people of Needham. About two years previous to his death, he had a stroke of paralysis, which prevented the discharge of his pastoral duties, and finally terminated his life. He was a most excellent Christian minister, much beloved by his parish in life, and deeply lamented in death. He married, May 22, 1794, Miss Catharine, only daughter of Rev. Mr. Haven, of Dedham; and had four children.

DANIEL WHEATON, Esq. (grad. H.U. 1791), was the son of Dr. George Wheaton; and was born in the North Precinct, Sept. 10, 1767. He studied law, and located in the south-easterly part of Easton, on what is called the "Bay Road." He was appointed Postmaster for the towns of Easton, Norton, and Mansfield, about 1798; and his was the first post-office established within the ancient limits of Norton. He married Hannah Le Baron Goodwin, Feb. 3, 1794; and had six children. She died July 31, 1831. His second wife was Mary R. Goodwin (sister of first wife), married Sept. 20, 1832. She died Nov. 14, 1834; and he subsequently, for third wife, married Hannah Le Baron, of Bristol, R.I. He died Sept. 11, 1841.

Rev. ISAAC BRAMAN (grad. H.U. 1794) was the son of Sylvanus and Experience (Blanchard) Braman; the grandson of Daniel and Rachel (Cambell) Braman; great-grandson of Thomas Braman, sen., one of the first settlers of Norton; and was born July 5, 1770. His father died when he was about twelve years old; and he was placed under the care of a guardian, who, for some years, opposed his plan of seeking a collegiate education. But the determined spirit of young Isaac finally triumphed, and he commenced preparation for college when in his eighteenth year. He studied theo-

logy with Rev. Samuel West, D.D., of New Bedford ; and with Rev. Jason Haven, of Dedham. Near the close of the year 1795, he commenced preaching, and soon received a call to settle at Medway ; which he declined. After the parish had heard *sixty-three* candidates, he went to New Rowley (now Georgetown), and, by great prudence and shrewdness, succeeded in harmonizing the conflicting elements of the society : so that he was called to the pastoral office, and was ordained June 7, 1797 ; which relation he continued to hold till his death, Dec. 26, 1858 ; though, for sixteen years, he had a colleague. He married, Aug. —, 1797, Hannah, daughter of Rev. Mr. Palmer, of this town ; and had by her five children. His second wife (married March 22, 1837) was Miss Sarah Balch, of Newburyport. Mr. Braman “was a Calvinist of the old school.” He always read his sermons, and was much confined to his “notes :” but his mind was logical and clear ; his style chaste, concise, and somewhat racy. He was naturally rather reserved in his manners, and hence shone not in the social circle. He was quite conservative in his notions, and took little interest in what are called the “reform movements of the day.” In 1852, a fine steel engraving of him was made ; but it is too large for our pages, or we would have inserted it.

TIMOTHY BRIGGS (grad. B.U. 1794) was the son of Deacon Timothy and Abigail (Patten) Briggs ; and was born Aug. 3, 1771. After graduating, he was offered a tutorship in his alma mater ; but declined it, having previously made arrangements to enter into mercantile pursuits. In the prosecution of his business, he went south, and there took the yellow-fever ; of which disease he died, unmarried, soon after reaching the harbor of Boston, on one of its islands, Sept. 1, 1797. In the “Columbian Centinel” of Nov. 22, 1797, is an obituary notice of him ; but, by some almost unaccountable blunder of the writer or printer, he is there called *John* Briggs. The writer says, “His understanding was penetrating ; his taste truly refined

and elegant; and his heart, to a remarkable degree, social and sympathetic." — "While literature mourns in him the loss of a shining son, and our country one of her most promising citizens, his memory will live in the heart of his acquaintance, and point them to the true dignity of man."

DAVID GILBERT, Esq. (grad. H.U. 1798), was the son of James and Elizabeth (Williams, 3d) Gilbert; and was born June 11, 1771. Some years after his birth, his father removed to Mansfield, and resided there at the time David entered college; who, after graduating, studied law with Judge Wheaton, and located at Mansfield, where he remained till he died, Sept. 12, 1842. He married, Feb. 17, 1800, Deborah, daughter of Rev. Roland Green, of Mansfield; and had seven children.

Rev. GARDNER BRAMAN PERRY, D.D. (grad. Union College, Schenectady, N.Y., 1804), was the son of Nathan and Phebe (Braman) Perry; and was born Aug. 9, 1783. He fitted for college at the academy in this town, and entered Brown University; but, in 1802, left for Union College. After graduating, he was about one year Principal of the Ballston Academy, N.Y. Thenceforth, till 1807, he was tutor in Union College. He then assumed the charge of the academy at Kingston, N.Y.; where he remained till 1812. On the 28th of September, 1814, he was settled as pastor of the Congregational Church at East Bradford (now Groveland); where he continued as sole pastor till 1851, when a colleague was called. His amiable disposition and affable manners have won for him general respect; and his advice and counsel have been often sought in both civil and ecclesiastical difficulties. While earnestly engaged in his ministerial duties, he has not forgotten other collateral means of elevating and blessing the world. With unfailing assiduity, he has done what he could to elevate the character of the common schools in his town and vicinity; and his opinions upon educational matters have been highly valued. But probably in the temperance reform his



Engraving by J. B. Perry

Gardner B. Perry

On

labors have been more conspicuous than in any of the moral movements of the age; and, so long as his physical strength would permit, he was a most efficient worker and officer in various temperance societies. Even now, in the winter of life, his interest in the good cause is unabated; for he feels that it is of God. He married, May 22, 1816, Maria P. Chamberlain, of Exeter, N.H.; by whom he had one child. His second wife (married July 20, 1819) was Eunice Tuttle, of Acton; by whom he had four children. He married, for third wife, Sarah Brown, of Grafton, May 22, 1827; and they have had four children.

Dr. TISDALE HODGES (grad. B.U. 1804) was the son of Tisdale and Naomi (Hodges) Hodges (descended from William, who was at Taunton in 1643, through John, John, and Edmund); and was born April 21, 1783. When a boy, the calf of his leg was so badly cut with a scythe in the hands of his brother, who was mowing, that he ever afterwards was lame. He was a physician; and died, unmarried, on board of a ship, near the coast of Africa, about 1808.

Capt. DAUPHIN KING (grad. Burlington College, Vt., 1810) was the son of Capt. Josiah and Miriam (Cobb) King, grandson of Capt. Josiah and Ruth (Basset) King, great-grandson of John and Margaret (Winslow) King; and was born Oct. 15, 1790. When young, his father removed to Burlington, Vt., where he remained till some years after his graduation. He subsequently returned to Norton; and, for many years, was a successful "sea-captain." In the winter of 1852, he sailed for Rio Janeiro; but, when a few days out from New York, he was struck with paralysis, and was put ashore at Port Praya (one of the Cape de Verd Islands), where he died May 20 of that year. In his manners, he was very blunt, and somewhat eccentric; but a straightforward man, a good neighbor, and a valuable citizen. He married, Oct. 2, 1825, Harriot A. Raymond; and had three children by her. She died Jan. 11, 1840. His second wife was Hannah C.

D., daughter of Rev. M. Allen, of Pembroke ; by whom he had one son.

Dr. WILLIAM PERRY (grad. H.U. 1811) is a brother of Rev. G. B. Perry, just noticed ; and was born Dec. 20, 1788. He labored on the paternal farm till seventeen years of age, when he commenced preparing for college under the tuition of Samuel M. Pond (a law student with Judge Wheaton), and entered Union College ; but, the next year, left for Harvard. He studied medicine with Dr. James Thatcher, of Plymouth ; Dr. John Warren, of Boston ; and at the Medical School of Harvard College. The degree of M.D. was given him in 1814 ; and he immediately located at Exeter, N.H., where he has continued to the present time, having had a very extensive practice in that vicinity, and been quite distinguished both as a physician and surgeon. By his sound judgment, accurate discrimination, and careful attention to his patients, he is still esteemed one of the best practitioners in the county where he resides. From 1830 to 1835, he paid great attention to the subject of insanity ; and mainly to his influence and exertions, by the delivery of lectures before the Legislature, which did much to concentrate public opinion in favor of an Insane Asylum, are the community indebted for that institution, which was soon afterwards erected at Concord, N.H. In 1836, he was appointed lecturer on the theory and practice of medicine at the Bowdoin-College Medical School, in Brunswick, Me. The next year, he was offered a professorship in the Medical School there, but declined to accept it. He has paid much attention to the practical application of chemistry to medicine and the arts, and first introduced into this country the manufacture of what was called "English gum," which was used in the print-works at Lowell for twenty years, till a substitute was found. Dr. Perry married, April 8, 1818, Abigail, daughter of Hon. Nathaniel Gilman, of Exeter, N.H. ; and has had five children.

Hon. NATHANIEL GODFREY BABBIT (grad. Middle-

bury College, Vt., 1811) was born Feb. 12, 1787, and was the son of Dr. Nathan Babbit (see Physicians); and went, when quite small, with his father to Westmoreland, N.H. He fitted for college at the academy in Newfane, Vt., and Chesterfield, N.H. He studied law with Daniel Dwight, Esq., and Ex-Governor Hubbard, of New Hampshire; and, in the fall of 1814, opened a law-office in Hinsdale, N.H., and was the first Postmaster of that town. In 1815, he removed to Westmoreland, where he continued in practice till 1842, when he was appointed Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Cheshire County, N.H.; which office he held till 1855, when the courts were remodelled, and the old judges dismissed from further duties. During the presidency of J. K. Polk, he was Postmaster of Westmoreland; and he has been town-clerk, selectman, &c. He married, Dec. 1, 1816, Miss Eunice Brewster; and has had three children. In 1858, he removed to Beloit, Wis., to reside with his son.

Rev. THOMAS SHEPARD, D.D. (grad. B.U. 1813), was born May 7, 1792; and is the son of Jacob and Lydia (Clapp) Shepard. Rev. Mase Shepard, already noticed, was his uncle. Dr. Shepard graduated from the Andover Theological Seminary in 1816, and, for a time, acted as agent of the American Bible Society. He was ordained pastor of the Congregational Church in Ashfield, June 15, 1819; and, at his request, was dismissed May 8, 1833, for the purpose of accepting the agency for New England of the American Bible Society; which he subsequently relinquished, and was installed pastor of the Congregational Church in Bristol, R.I., April 30, 1835, where he still officiates as pastor. He married Sarah Barrett, of Northfield; and has had nine children.

EARL PERCY WHITE, Esq. (grad. B.U. 1813), was born June 4, 1790; and was the son of Major Zebulon and Prudence (Pitts) White. He was a lawyer by profession, and practised for many years in his native town. He was the first Postmaster of Norton. In

1817, he married Juline Everett, and had seven children. He was a man of fine talents, but did not apply himself very closely to his professional duties. In June, 1837, he removed to Illinois; and died at Copperas Creek, in that State, January, 1849.

BENJAMIN COPELAND, Esq. (grad. B.U. 1815), was born May 11 or 14, 1791; and is the son of Samuel and Eunice (Danforth) Copeland, and the grandson of Deacon Benjamin Copeland. He studied law, but never practised to any great extent. He now resides at Clarendon, N.Y., and is quite extensively engaged in mercantile and agricultural pursuits.

HON. LABAN MOREY WHEATON (grad. B.U. 1817) was born Sept. 14, 1796; and is the son of Hon. Laban Wheaton, already noticed. He studied law, but never has given much attention to the duties of the profession. For many years, he was Postmaster of Norton; has three times represented his native town in the Legislature; been twice a member of the Governor's Council; and also one of the Trustees of the State Industrial School for Girls, at Lancaster. His father bequeathed him a large estate, and he is now much the wealthiest man in town. He married Miss Eliza B. Chapin, of Uxbridge, June 25, 1829; but has had no children.

REV. DANIEL LE BARON GOODWIN (grad. B.U. 1822) is the son of Daniel and Polly (Briggs) Goodwin; and was born in Easton, July 28, 1802. Within a year or two after his birth, his father removed to Norton, where he spent the remainder of his days. Mr. Goodwin's mother is sister of Timothy Briggs, who graduated in 1794. May 23, 1825, he was ordained in St. Paul's Church, Boston, and, on the 15th of July following, took up his residence in Sutton as an Episcopal clergyman; where he remained till April, 1854, when he removed to Providence, R.I., where he is still employed as a "church missionary" for the city. In December, 1825, he married Rebecca, daughter of William Wilkinson, Esq., of Providence, R.I.; and has had ten children.

years, did a sort of missionary work in this vicinity; preaching in schoolhouses and elsewhere, as he had opportunity; being the keeper of a country store during the week. In 1816, he was ordained as a minister at Pawtucket, R.I.; but soon removed to Tiverton, R.I., and took charge of the Baptist Church there. Subsequently, he preached at Coventry and Providence, R.I.; and, in 1834, removed to Chicopee, but did not preach regularly after that time. He died at his daughter's house, in Hartford, Conn., Jan. 3, 1855. The "Christian Secretary," soon after his death, published an obituary notice of him. His body was taken to Chicopee for burial. He married, about 1783, Sarah Tisdale. She died; and, for second wife, he married, May 24, 1793, Lydia Harding. After her death, he was again married. In all, he had eleven children.

REV. EBENEZER BURT — born March 9, 1766 — was the son of Deacon Ebenezer and Abigail (Basset) Burt; grandson of Ebenezer and Naomi (Cambell) (Acres) Burt; and the great-grandson of Ebenezer and Lydia (Tippen) Burt, who were among the early inhabitants of Norton. When fourteen years old, Mr. Burt joined the old Baptist Church. Aug. 29, 1794, he was licensed to preach by the Baptist Church of Dighton, and preached in this vicinity till Nov. 2, 1796, when he removed to Hardwick, and gathered a society in the south-west part of that town, where he was ordained as an evangelist (standing upon a great rock), June 20, 1797. A church was organized in 1806, and he was installed the pastor; which position he held till November, 1846, when he preached his half-century sermon. Since then, he has not preached regularly. From July, 1845, to 1851, he resided at Ware Village. From thence he removed to Athol (Depot) Village, where, he says, "I am suffered to live yet." He has preached occasionally since he was ninety years old, and the whole number of sermons he has preached is about four thousand nine hundred and seventy-five. His mind is still

active, and his memory of events and dates wonderful. Recently, when asked where he studied theology, he answered, "In my Bible." He has been an able and efficient minister; and now, in the winter of life, enjoys the respect, and almost veneration, of all sects of Christians who know him. He married, Nov. 19, 1789, Lucy Stacy, of Taunton; and has had seven children.

Dr. IRA SMITH was a brother of Jonathan Smith, already noticed; and was born March 2, 1766. He married Nancy S. Hodges in 1797; and soon after removed to Monkton, Vt., where he died about 1802, leaving three children.

SILAS COBB, Esq., was the son of Gen. Silas and Deliverance (Hodges) Cobb, grandson of Benjamin and Mary Cobb; and was born Sept. 25, 1768. He studied law, and opened an office in Rehoboth; but soon removed to Swanzey, where he spent most of his subsequent life, and died there July 9, 1818. He married, Sept. 17, 1801, Miss Eunice Smith, of this town; and had two children, one of whom is our townsman, Daniel S. Cobb, Esq.

Dr. NATHAN PERRY was the son of Nathan and Phebe (Braman) Perry, and was born May 27, 1776. For many years, he was a practising physician at North Bridgewater; and died there Aug. 16, 1857. He married Tiley Clapp in 1806 (?), and had several children.

Rev. NATHANIEL STONE — born June 6, 1785 — was the son of Nathaniel and Rebecca (Woodward) Stone, grandson of Nathaniel and Sarah (Woodward) Stone, and great-grandson of William and Mehitable (Lane) Stone. In the spring of 1825, he was ordained at Providence, R.I., as a local preacher of the Methodist Conference. He lived at the eastern part of Mansfield, and preached there and in the neighboring towns as he had opportunity. He married, in 1815, Chloe Cobb, by whom he had several children; and died of consumption, July 26, 1840.

Dr. JERRY HODGES — born March 22, 1787 — was a

brother of Drs. Tisdale and Guilford Hodges, already noticed. He studied medicine with Dr. Thomas Nelson, of Bristol, R.I. In 1805, he removed with his father to Petersham; and, about two years later, commenced practice in Templeton, where he resided about ten years, when he removed to Hinsdale, N.H., and was there about four years. He then removed to Petersham, where he continued till his death, April 3, 1858; having held a high rank among the physicians of that vicinity. He was the "seventh son," and, by many, was thought to have been "born a doctor." On the strength of this absurd notion, he was frequently called upon to cure the "King's Evil;" and, by the use of a little tact, succeeded in giving very general satisfaction to his patients. July 21, 1813, he married Mary S. Tucker, of Winchendon; and had eleven children.

Dr. BUTLER WILMARTH was the illegitimate son of Peggy Coleman; grandson of James Coleman, a native of Ireland, whose wife's maiden name was Molly Wetherell (a descendant of the first settler); and was born Dec. 18, 1798. It is somewhat uncertain who his father was; but he is believed to have been a man of some note in town. June 28, 1802, Butler was bound out by the selectmen to Amos Wilmarth, of Rowe, till he was twenty-one years old, "to learn the Art of Husbandry." He was subsequently adopted by Mr. Wilmarth, and took his name. When young, he gave such striking predilections for medical studies, that his playmates gave him the *sobriquet* of "doctor." Though compelled to labor hard during his minority, he managed to gather sufficient education to teach school. When about twenty-three years old, he began the study of medicine with Dr. William F. Selden, of Amherst; paying for his board by labor on the farm. Two years later, he put himself under the tuition of Dr. Brigham, of Greenfield, who soon after removed from that vicinity. Whereupon Mr. Wilmarth, without having completed his studies, and without any diploma or license, with that self-reliance that always

characterized his actions, entered upon the duties of physician at Montague (where his foster-father had resided for some years), and soon won the confidence and respect of many influential citizens, and became widely known as a skilful practitioner. About 1834, he removed to Leverett, where he was almost venerated for his skill in the treatment of chronic diseases. Ten years later, he joined the Hopedale Community, at Milford. In 1847, ill health sent him to the Water-cure Institution at New Lebanon, N.Y., where he was so much benefited by the treatment, that he became a convert to hydropathy, and in 1852, in connection with Dr. J. H. Hero, opened a "Water Cure" at Westborough. In 1851, he was chosen President of the Hydropathic Association of Physicians and Surgeons then met at New-York City. Two years later, he attended the annual meeting of that association, of which he was still the honored president, and left for home in the ill-fated train which was precipitated into the river at Norwalk, Conn.; and in that awful tragedy (probably by drowning) was terminated his life, May 6, 1853. He was a man of great practical common sense, and of more than ordinary talent. One proof of his nobleness of mind is in the fact, that, although well aware of his illegitimate origin, he never allowed that circumstance to keep him in the shades of obscurity; but, with that true manliness which shone forth in all his actions, he felt with Burns, that —

"A man's a man for a' that."

He was somewhat eccentric, yet unassuming, in his manners. He had no love for forms or fashion; and hence, by the wealthy and fastidious, he was not appreciated. In fine, he was one of the most sincere, practically Christian men that any town can call its son. His leading characteristics were self-reliance, benevolence, good-humor, joined with an unswerving loyalty to conscience, to truth, and to God. He married, in 1831, Phila Osgood, of Wendell, and had two

children, who are honored more, in descending from such a father, than if they had been the offspring of a titled and soulless nobility.¹

REV. FREDERIC DEAN GOODWIN is the son of Daniel and Polly Goodwin, and was born Feb. 15, 1804. He entered Amherst College; but did not graduate, on account of ill health. He is an Episcopal clergyman, and, at one time, was settled in Richmond, Va.; and has held the rectorship of several parishes in that State, in which he now resides, at Wytheville, where he officiates as rector. He married, at "Old Point Comfort," in 1837, Mary F. Archer; and has quite a family of children.

REV. WILLIAM HENRY KNAPP was born Sept. 19, 1811; and is the son of Abiathar and Nancy (White) Knapp, grandson of Daniel and Mary (Field) Knapp, and great-grandson of Jonathan and Mehitabel (Tucker) Knapp. He commenced his ministerial duties as a Universalist minister, and preached at several places previous to 1844, when he was settled over the Unitarian Society at Nantucket. In 1851, he took charge of the society at West Newton. One year (1854-5), he was Steward of Antioch College, O.; and preached in that neighborhood as opportunity offered. In 1856, he took charge of the Congregational Society at Sterling, where he (1858) resides. He is married, and has several children.

DON EGBERT ERASTUS BRAMAN, Esq., is the son of Andrews and Nancy (Hawes) Braman; grandson of Sylvanus and Sarah (Andrews) Braman; great-grandson of Sylvanus and Experience (Blanchard) Braman; great-great-grandson of Daniel and Rachel (Cambell) Braman; great-great-great-grandson of Thomas Braman, sen., one of the first settlers of this town; and was born Sept. 21, 1814. He went to Texas in April, 1837, and was in the army of the revolution several months. In 1847, he was appointed Clerk of the First Judicial District Court, studying

¹ For more particulars of Dr. Wilmarth, see Memoir by William H. Fish.

law while he held that office; and was admitted to the bar of that court in 1853. He is now a counsellor-at-law in Matagorda, Texas; where he married, April 28, 1841, Mary E. Buckhart, of Philadelphia, Pa., and has had seven children.

Rev. GEORGE CARPENTER was born Aug. 30, 1818; and is the son of Deacon James and Anna (Hunt) Carpenter, grandson of William and Hannah (Keith) Carpenter, great-grandson of William Carpenter, and great-great-grandson of Rev. William and Abigail Carpenter, of this town. March 17, 1839, he united with the Baptist Church, and forthwith began preparation for the ministry. He entered Brown University in 1841, where he remained a little more than a year, when the college exercises were broken up by the "Dorr Rebellion;" and he did not return there, but soon entered the Theological Institution in New Hampton, N.H., where he graduated in 1845. In the autumn of 1846, he was ordained pastor of the Baptist Church in Westminster, and was there three years. Subsequently, he has been pastor at Rowe and Scituate; and, in 1857, removed to the village of Factory Point (Manchester), Vt., and is now minister of the Baptist Church there. April 17, 1846, he married Julia C. Dow (a niece of the eccentric preacher, Lorenzo Dow), and has had four children.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SLAVERY.

"The sum of all villainies." — WESLEY.

WITH but one exception, — that of slaveholding, — the people of Norton have ever been found on the side of freedom and the inalienable rights of man; yet, we are happy to record, they have sincerely repented of that awful crime against humanity. For, strange as it

may appear, Norton was once a slaveholding town; and our pen blushes with shame when we say that some of the masters, as well as their slaves, were members of the church. In 1735, ten slaves were returned from this town by the assessors. In the census of 1764-5, thirty were returned. Rev. Mr. Avery, the three George Leonards, Ephraim Leonard, John Hodges, George Morey, Benjamin Fairbanks, Rev. Mr. Palmer, Dr. Gideon Tiffany, Nathan Hodges, William Stone, and others, are known to have had slaves. I have found two bills of the sale of slaves, one of which is here recorded:—

“Know all men by these Presants, that I, Jonathan Wilson, of Newport, in the Colony of Rhod island, and Provedance Plantation in new england, yeoman, for and in Consideration of Seventy Pounds in Curant mony to me in hand, before the Sealing and delivery hereof, well and truly Paid by George Leonard, of norton, in the County of Bristoll, in ye Province of masachusetts Bay in new England, Blomer, whareof I do hereby acknoledg myselfe tharewith to be fully Satisfied, Contented, and Paid, and have Bargained, Sold, Sett over, and delivered, and by these Presants do Give, Grant, Bargaine, Sell, make over, and deliver, unto him, Sd. George Leonard, and to his heysrs, Execetors, administrators, and assigns, for Ever, one negro woman named Binah, which is now in the Posesion of Sd. George Leonard; who is the Sd. negro woman to have and to hold to his and theyr Proper youse and behafe for ever. And I, the Sd. Jonathan Wilson, for myselfe, my heysrs, Execetors, administrators, the Sd. Bargained and delivered negro woman unto the Sd. George Leonard, and to his heysrs, Execetors, administrators, and assigns, against all and Every Person and Persons whomesoever, do Promise to warrant and defend for Ever by these Presants. in witnes whareof, I have hereunto Sett my hand and Seall, this Eleventh day of october, in the first year of his majestie’s Reigne, anno domini 1727.

“Signed, Sealed, and delivered in Presance of us,

“JONA. WILSON [seal].

“NATHL. NEWDIGATE.
JOSEPH MASON.”

The other, dated March 7, 1745-6, is signed by Jonathan Dwight, an innholder of Boston, and conveys to George Leonard, of Norton, for one hundred and fifty pounds, old tenor, "a negro boy named Prince, aged about thirteen years."

These things sound strangely to our ears; and we thank God that this inhuman and unchristian practice long ago ceased to exist among us, and is now receiving the anathemas of the whole Christian world, except the guilty parties and their apologists.

Mr. Avery had a slave named Mingo, whom he one day set to planting pumpkin-seeds; but Mingo became tired, and disposed of all the seeds by putting them under a large flat stone. In hoeing-time, they had thrust their heads out all round the stone, and revealed the slave's unfaithfulness. Mr. Avery (who was very fond of pumpkin-pies) called the slave, and, pointing to the young vines, gave him no other reproof but the sorrowful ejaculation, "O Mingo, Mingo! what shall we do for pumpkin-pies at Thanksgiving?"

In a draught of Mrs. Avery's will, she mentions a slave named Pero, who was given her by her father; and she gave him his liberty, provided he could get bonds never to become a public charge: but in her will, as finally executed, no mention of Pero is made. Yet, in after-life, he was actually supported by the town, and is sometimes called "Pero Newman." He died July 29, 1802, supposed to have been more than a hundred years old; and the town paid two shillings for rum drank at his funeral. Mrs. Palmer had a slave given her by her father, who subsequently received his freedom. In the "Boston Gazette" of July 29, 1771, it was stated that *Quashee*, a negro, who for many years had brought sauce to the Boston market, had lately died at Dedham: but, on the 19th of August following, the same paper announced that *Quashee* was not dead, but, being in his eighty-fifth year, had retired to his country seat in Norton to spend the winter of his life; and that his absence from the

market, where he had been constantly seen for fifty years, led to the supposition that he was dead. The article closes in these words: "On suitable Encouragement, a capital Mezzitinto Scraper would wait on him at his Villa, to beg the favor of an Equestrian Print of his accomplished person."

Slavery was not congenial to the soil of Massachusetts; and on the establishment of the State Constitution, which asserts, in the Declaration of Rights, that "ALL MEN ARE BORN FREE AND EQUAL," many of the negroes claimed their freedom, and obtained it by virtue of this clause. In 1781, a white man was indicted for assaulting, beating, and imprisoning a negro. His defence before the Supreme Court, in 1783, was that the black man was his slave. He was answered by the complainants with the citation of the clause in the Declaration of Rights just quoted; and, on the strength of it, was declared guilty, and fined. By this decision of the judges and jury was given the death-blow to slavery in our State; for, in the next census, no slaves were returned, but four thousand three hundred and seventy-seven black persons were mentioned.

The antislavery movement commenced here about 1835. The mobbing of Mr. Garrison is supposed to have called the attention of a few persons to the subject; and some antislavery tracts were circulated, which proved to be seed cast into good ground. About the same time (1835), George W. Makepeace gave a proslavery lecture before the Lyceum. This led to an earnest discussion of the matter, in which the antislavery side was sustained by George L. Clarke and others. Among the first antislavery addresses given were those of Stephen S. Foster, Parker Pillsbury, and C. C. Burleigh. During the ministry of Rev. Mr. Tilden, much antislavery seed was sown by his earnest advocacy of human rights. In 1841 (the first year of his ministry), John A. Collins, an agent of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society, and Frederic Douglass, who had previously spoken but a few times, addressed

the citizens of Norton upon the subject. In the summer of 1843, the Congregational Church, of which Mr. Tilden was the pastor, held several meetings to consider the subject of slavery; and finally, Oct. 29 of that year, adopted, "without any opposition," the following preamble and resolution:—

"Whereas we believe that Christianity, as taught by Jesus, is a religion of Love, requiring love for God as a Father, and love for man as a brother; and whereas we believe that slavery, wherever it exists, is a gross violation of that great law of love, and therefore a sin against God and humanity:—

"Therefore Resolved, That we are bound, by the holy principles of the religion we profess, to bear a faithful testimony against slavery in all its forms, and to put forth our efforts in the use of Christian means for its thorough and complete abolition."

On the 5th of July, 1847, the "Liberty Party" had a picnic celebration in the grove, near the late residence of Rev. Pitt Clarke; and two fugitive slaves, Messrs. Clark and Bibb, made addresses. The first antislavery vote cast in town, and the only one given that year, was in 1839, for Wendell Phillips, Governor. In 1841, fifteen votes were cast for Governor; in 1842, thirty; in 1843, there were sixty; and in 1849, one hundred and fifty-five votes, or thirty-six majority of the whole number cast, were for the antislavery gubernatorial candidate. And, from that day to this, the antislavery sentiment has predominated in town. Though some of the sons of Norton, who have made their home in the south, have been guilty of slaveholding and the traffic in human flesh, yet we believe their number has been very small.

CHAPTER XL.

TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT.

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink; that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also." — HABAKKUK.

THE history of intemperance in Norton is similar to that of other towns. In days that are past, we trust never to return, it was not considered disreputable to sell or drink intoxicating liquors; for their use was very general, and as generally believed that their use was beneficial. Probably, in the early history of the town, intoxicating drinks were not so freely used as in later years, because they could not be obtained so easily. Yet there is abundant evidence that the first settlers sometimes indulged to excess. But, during the first quarter of the present century, a large majority of the people daily took their drams, ministers not excepted. I have looked over with much interest some account-books of one of the storekeepers of Norton, of a date some fifty years back; and rum, brandy, wine, &c., formed the principal article of charge; and, in some cases, three-fourths of all the items on a whole page of the ledger, to a single person, were for liquors. At all public gatherings, military parades, venduing of the poor, auctions, raisings, ministerial associations, weddings, and funerals, liquors were deemed indispensable; and both sexes partook of them freely.

The following entry, which I have found in an old book in town, will serve to illustrate the manner in which things were done within the memory of many now living: "May 26, 1819, Chose the Artillery officers, and had two wash-tubs full of Punch." It was customary "To Post" those who were considered as drunkards; which was done by putting up, in some

public place, their names by the selectmen, and forbidding the venders of liquor to sell to them. This was not often done, except in some extreme cases. The temperance reformation commenced in this town about 1828, and Rev. Pitt Clarke took an active part in organizing a Temperance Society; but I can find no records of that society, nor can I gather much reliable information relative to it. The first pledge was only against the use of distilled liquors; not prohibiting the use of wine, cider, beer, &c. Here, as elsewhere, the movement against intemperance met with opposition from some who were deemed influential men; but others as influential were enlisted in the warfare upon ardent spirits, and both parties struggled for the mastery. It was, no doubt, felt by the friends of temperance, that too many persons were licensed "for the public good;" and we presume an attempt was made to curtail the number: for, in the warrant for the annual March meeting in 1830, there was an article "To see what number of Taverners and Retailers the town will authorize their selectmen to approbate the ensuing year;" but it was "voted to dismiss the article respecting licenses." The matter was again revived at a meeting of the town, June 17, 1833, held to consider the petition of Simeon Dean and fourteen others, that the town "determine, by ballot, whether the inhabitants were in favor of having Taverners and Retailers licensed to sell spirituous Liquors the ensuing year; and also to see if all respectable people who wished to sell liquors might be approbated by the selectmen." At the meeting, it was voted not to decide by ballot, but to divide the house on the question; and seventy-eight persons voted for licensing, and forty-seven against; and the selectmen were directed to approbate as many taverners and retailers as had usually been licensed. These licenses to sell spirituous liquors were granted by the Court of Sessions till that court was abolished about 1820, and subsequently by the County Commissioners. The Commissioners of Bristol County were among the first to refuse

licenses. The temperance question entered very much into the election of these officers in the spring of 1838, and a Temperance Board were elected, who refused to issue licenses to sell as a beverage; and rum-selling and drunkard-making have been outlaws in the county from that day to this. The following list is believed to comprise nearly all the names of those who have been licensed in this town, from 1712 to 1837. Those marked with a (*) had a retailer's license. Most of the others are supposed to have kept public-houses. Yet retailers sometimes took a tavern license.

Nathaniel Hodges, 1712; Samuel Hodges, 1713-19; John Finney,* 1724-27; John Austin, 1726-34; Benj. Hodges,* 1727-29; John Harvey, 1728-30; Samuel Caswell, 1728-30; William Ware, 1729-40; Josiah Pratt, 1731-38; Benjamin Cobb,* 1732-33; Ebenezer Hodges, 1733-46; Jonathan Lawrence, 1738-40; Henry Wetherell, 1738-41; Benjamin Lane, 1743; George Morey, 1744-73; Thomas Morey, 1747; George Hodges, 1749-50; Jonathan Newcomb, 1751-64; Timothy Skinner, 1754-55; Ephraim Lane, 1754-67; Paul Cook, 1755-56; Thomas Skinner, 1756; Stephen Gary, 1756; James Godfrey, 1757-75; David Smith, 1757-58; Lewis Sweeting, 1760-68; Abraham White, 1760-72; William Dean, 1761; Samuel Lane, 1762-77; Joseph Newcomb, 1762-64; Seth Smith, 1764-67; George Makepeace, 1765-73; Ephraim Lane, jun., 1768-73; George Leonard, 3d, 1768; Isaac Smith, 1768-73; Solomon Trow, 1768-69; Brian Hall, 1772-78; Eleazer Walker, 1772-96; Silas Cobb, 1772-1802; Nathan Cobb, 1776-82; Abiah Hall, 1779-83; Elkanah Woodward, 1779-1808; Adam Johnstone, 1780-87; Nathan Babbit, jun., 1780-87; Benjamin Hodges,* 1782; John Hodges, 1783; Abiel Lincoln,* 1784-85; Joshua Pond, 1784-87; Isaac Barker,* 1787; Reuben Tisdale,* 1787-88; Oliver Leonard, 1788; Thomas Fobes, 1789-94; David Lincoln, jun., 1789-99; Ephraim Raymond, 1794-1811; Seth Smith, jun., 1794-97; Samuel Godfrey, 1794-96; Jonathan Smith, 1794-1808; Meletiah Washburn, 1795-97; Hezekiah Tucker, 1795-99; Josiah Woodward, 1795-1810; Isaac Stone, 1796; Jacob Shaw, 1797-98; Ebenezer Lazell, 1797-1800; George Palmer, 1794-97; Elisha Hodges, 1798-99; Joseph Palmer, 1799-1800; George Gilbert, 1800-15; Thomas Danforth, 1801-17; Jacob Balcom,

1801; Enoch Balcom, 1802-7; Sylvanus Braman, 1802; Jonathan Leonard, 1802-3; Daniel Parker, jun., 1804; Benjamin King, 1806-7; Benjamin Horton,* 1806-10; Sylvester Leonard, 1808-10; Simeon Presbury, jun., 1808-10; Wm. Braman,* 1808-10; Asa Arnold, 1809-28; J. L. Munroe, 1809-15; Sally Balcom, 1809-10; Michael Sweet, jun., 1811-12; Stephen Hodges, 1812; Eleazer Walker, 1815; Andrews Braman, 1816-24; Thompson Tripp,* 1816-22; J. L. Munroe, jun., 1817-37; Daniel Smith, 2d, 1817-21; Preston Hodges, 1817-20; Zebulon White, jun., 1819; John G. Wood, 1821-23; Eliab F. Tucker, 1821; Francis Sturtevant, 1822; Leavit Bates,* 1822-25; Laban M. Wheaton, 1822-25; Nathaniel Newcomb, 1823-24; John Hunt,* 1823-25; J. F. Alden, 1824; John J. Bishop, 1824; James Lincoln,* 1824; Elijah Lincoln,* 1825-37; Leonard Smith,* 1825-26; Benj. Horton, 1826; James L. Derry, 1826-27; Timothy Smith, 1826-32; Benjamin E. Horton, 1827; David C. Bates, 1827-32; Nathaniel Munroe, 1830; Seth Hodges, jun.,* 1831; William Munroe, 1831-34; Josiah Hodges, 1832-33; Hiram Hodges, 1832; Elijah H. King, 1833-35; William H. Shackelford, 1834; Horace B. Wetherell,* 1835-37; Jesse Blandin, 1835-37; Hiram H. Wetherell,* 1837.

In the course of a few years, it was found that the old pledge against distilled liquors was not sufficient to stay the tide of drunkenness; for persons could be intoxicated every day on cider, &c., and not break their pledge: so that at length it was deemed important, and public opinion became prepared, to adopt the total-abstinence pledge. From the records of the Temperance Society, it appears that a re-organization took place in May, 1837, on the basis of the following pledge:—

“We whose names are hereunto annexed, believing that the use of intoxicating liquor as a beverage is not only needless, but hurtful to the social, civil, and religious interest of man; that it tends to form intemperate habits; and that, while it is continued, the evils of intemperance can never be done away,—

“Do therefore agree that we will not use it as a beverage, or traffic in it; that we will not provide it as an article of

entertainment, or for persons in our employment; and that, in all suitable ways, we will discountenance the use of it throughout the community."

I cannot find any records of the society till the close of the year 1842. From the Secretary's Report, made Dec. 29, 1842, I learn the date of the re-organization: and he says the exact number of members is not known, yet it is supposed there were about one hundred; but, for two or three years, they did not make much progress. About 1840, they received a new impulse, and went to work in earnest. At the close of 1842, there were four hundred and seventy-five names attached to the pledge; one hundred and seventy-five of which were added within that year. At the close of 1843, there were five hundred and twelve members; in 1844, there were five hundred and fifty-two members; in 1846, there were five hundred and sixty-one members; in 1847, the society numbered five hundred and eighty-nine. The next year, only two names were added. In February, 1849, the Secretary reported that there were five hundred and seventy-seven members of the society; and, of these, one hundred and seventy had removed from town, thirty-two had died, thirteen had broken their pledge, six were doubtful, and three hundred and fifty-six good members remained in town. Frequent meetings were held, and addresses made, from 1841 to 1845. July 4, 1844, there was a grand/temperance picnic celebration in the grove between the houses of Thomas D. Lane and Joseph D. Sweet. About four hundred were present from Norton and North Taunton, including the cold-water army, made up of children. Aaron Lincoln, jun., was chief-marshal and president of the day. Toasts were given, speeches made, and a vote of thanks presented to Rev. Mr. Tilden for his unwavering efforts in the cause of temperance during his residence in Norton.¹

¹ Bristol-County Democrat, July 12, 1844.

The following persons have been presidents of the Norton Total-Abstinence Society from 1842 to 1855, elected in the order in which they are named: Rev. W. P. Tilden, Earl Hodges, Aaron Lincoln, jun., Mason Stone, Daniel S. Cobb, Stillman Smith, Albert Barrows, A. Lincoln, jun., Augustus Lane, Jonathan J. Stanley, Charles H. Briggs, Daniel S. Cobb, Stillman Smith. Since 1853 or 54, but few meetings have been held. In April, 1856, an attempt was made to re-organize the society, and adopt a pledge against the use of tobacco; but no organization was effected. After two or three meetings, all active efforts in behalf of temperance ceased; till, just as we go to press, in the spring of 1859, a new movement has sprung up; and, April 27, the Winneconnet Division, No. 100, of the Sons of Temperance, was instituted, consisting of fourteen members and eighteen lady-visitors. There has been but little rum sold in town for many years, except among the Irish population.

CHAPTER XLI.

MISCELLANEOUS HISTORY.

"Variety's the very spice of life,
That gives it all its flavor."

COWPER.

STOCKS AND WHIPPING-POST.

IN 1693, the General Court enacted, that "Breakers of the Peace, Prophaners of the Sabbath, unlawful Gamesters, Drunkards, prophane Swearers or Coursers," should be punished "by setting in the Stocks, or putting into the Cage, not exceeding Three Hours, or by whipping not exceeding Ten Stripes." Accordingly, in most towns, the stocks were set up, and

the whipping-post erected in some conspicuous position, — generally near the meeting-house, or place of public gatherings. The stocks were made of two pieces of timber, from six to eight feet long, laid one upon the other, the bottom one resting upon the ground, with two grooves cut in them, a foot or two apart, sufficiently large to admit a man's ankle. When wanted for use, the upper timber was removed. The offender was then made to sit down on the ground, and place each ankle in one of these grooves. Then the upper timber was replaced, and the two parts were firmly locked together; and thus there was no escape till the time of sentence had expired. It is supposed Norton did not have this instrument of the law for some years after her incorporation. The first allusion to the matter on the town-records is under the date of Nov. 1, 1723, when it was "voted to pay Robert Tucker, for setting the Stocks up, 00*lb.*—2*s.*—0*d.*" These probably did not last more than ten years; for, Sept. 18, 1733, it was "voted to Samuel Clap, for macking a pare of stocks, 00.—15.—0." Sept. 11, 1769, "voted to Salvenus Braman, for mending the stocks, 0.—2.—0.—0." These stocks continued to be used in many towns, for the punishment of minor crimes, till the close of the last century. There are persons living in town who distinctly recollect seeing the stocks on the Common, near where the old meeting-house stood. We know not whether the whipping-post was ever erected here or not; but we do know that offenders were sometimes sentenced to be whipped, as well as put into the stocks. The cage is not known to have been used here.

EAR-MARKS.

In the early settlement of our country, the lands, and especially the pasturing, were unfenced. The cattle, &c., were turned loose — generally with a bell attached to one of them — into the woods, and roamed about at pleasure; and hence the herds belonging to

the different settlers would be very likely to mingle one with another; and thus two men, having cattle that looked very much alike, would find some difficulty in determining what was their own, and what their neighbor's. But "necessity," we are told, "is the mother of invention." So, in order to know what was his own, each man put a mark, and the same mark, upon all his creatures.

This was usually made upon one or both ears, by cutting, cropping, slitting, &c.; and, in order that no two persons should adopt the same device, each one had his mark recorded on the town-records by the town-clerk. As these marks were curious in themselves, and also serve to illustrate the early history of the town, we will copy a few specimens from the town-books, giving also the date of entry. The first one we record is this:—

"Sept. 13, 1718. — Thomas Harvey his Eyer-marck for all his Creaturs Is two slits In the Hinder-part of the Right Eyer."

"May 29th, 1719. — Joseph Hodges his Eyer-marck for all his Creaturs is a Holl threw The midel part of Each year, and a hind-gad in the hinder-part of the Right year."

"Dec. 2nd, 1729. — Ephraim Lane his Eyear-marck for all his Creaturs is a Halpeney, Cut out of the fore-side of the Right Eyer."

"1722. — Mr. Joseph Avery His ear-mark is a slit in the under side of the Right Eare."

"May 23rd, 1738. — Thomas Shepard's Eyer-marck for all his creators Is a Crop of the top of the Left Eyer, and a swallow's taile in the top of the Right Eyr."

"Nov. 10th, 1747. — John Gilbert's, Juner, Eare-mark for all his Cretures is a swallow's Taile in ye top of the Right Eare, and a half-Penney in the under side of ye Left Eare."

"May 6th, 1758. — Ebenezer White's Ear-mark for all his Creatures is one hole through Each Ear."

"April 2nd, 1766. — The Revend. Mr. Roland Green's Ear-mark for all his creatures Is a half-peny, cut out of the upper-side and under-side of the Right Ear, and the top of the same ear cut of, and a slit in the top of the left ear."

This practice of making "Ear-marks" upon cattle

was pretty generally continued here till about the year 1800, and occasionally for a few years later.

The last entry of the kind that we have seen was made in 1839, and reads thus: "Thomas Copeland's Ear-mark for all his creatures is the top of the right ear cut off."

ANIMALS UPON THE COMMON, ETC.

In 1693, it was enacted by the General Court, that none but proprietors and freeholders should be allowed to have horses "run to feed upon any common Land;" and they were not allowed to have more than "one Horse-Beast upon the common," without paying five shillings per head: and the owners of all horses thus going upon the Common were required to have said horses entered with the town-clerk, together with "the natural and artificial Marks," on or before the 10th of April annually, under penalty of ten shillings fine. The "common land" spoken of, we suppose, means the undivided lands of the proprietors. Possibly it also included the idea of all the lands that were "common" or unfenced. In the same Act, it was required that all swine running at large should be sufficiently yoked from the 1st of April to the 15th of October, and "ringed in the Nose all the year," under penalty of sixpence per head fine. Furthermore, every sheep going upon the Common, not under the care of a shepherd, from the 1st of May to the last of October each year, subjected the owner thereof to a fine of threepence. Yet it is supposed that the several towns had the power to allow them to go at large without a shepherd; for, at a town-meeting on the 20th of March, 1722, it was "voted that the sheep should Go at Large to feed upon the Common, without being under the hands of a Shepeard." It is also supposed that swine were not allowed to run at large without a vote of the town each year; for we find, at a town-meeting on the 13th of March, 1721, it was "voted that the swine should go at Large upon the common, according to law." March 6, 1722, it was "voted to

Lett the Hoggs Run at Large upon ye common this year;" and a similar vote was passed yearly till 1802, when it was "voted that swine should not run at Large the year ensuing." At two subsequent annual meetings, a similar vote was passed. But this was an unpopular movement. It was an innovation upon a time-honored custom, and hence it must be resisted. A grand rally of the friends of the porkers was made in 1805; and the hogs were once more let out of prison, on the condition of their "being well *wringed* and yoked."

Whether this vote had reference to the "wringing of their necks," we leave the reader to decide. But the hogs maintained their liberty upon the Common till 1811, when they were again shut up: but they regained their liberty in 1813, and roamed at pleasure for two years; but their privileges were somewhat abated by a ring in their nose, and a crotched stick between their ears and shoulders, passing through a narrow strip of board under their throat, and called a "yoke." Their days of freedom were, however, numbered; for, in 1816, they were once more put into the narrow quarters of a pen, and they have never since had permission to go out therefrom.

THE POUND.

As early as 1698, the General Court enacted "that there shall be a sufficient Pound or Pounds made and maintained, from Time to Time, in every Town and Precinct within this Province, in such part or places thereof as the Selectmen shall direct and appoint, at the cost and charge of such Town or Precinct, for the impounding or restraining of any Swine, Neat Cattle, Horses, or Sheep, as shall be found damage-feasant in any Cornfield or other inclosures; or swine Unyoked or Unringed, Neat Cattle, Horses, or Sheep, going upon the Common, not allowed to feed there by the major part of the Propriety," &c.

In obedience to this law, the people of Norton, soon

after the organization of the town, took measures to provide themselves with one of these necessary appendages to every considerable settlement. At a meeting of the citizens, held May 23, 1715, the question of a pound or no pound was agitated; and, after a full discussion of the subject, it was "voted to have a Pound Built by Richard Briggs, with this proviso, that sd. Briggs Give the Town a deed of a piece of Land for that use during the time the Town Keep a pound there." This deed was doubtless given; and the pound built, probably on the corner of the lot owned by Seneca Sanford, where the road turns to go towards John Hunt's; or possibly between the corner and the house of Josephus Skinner, on the lot owned by William A. West. Richard Briggs, for some years, was pound-keeper.

A new pound is supposed to have been built about 1728; for a rate was raised that year, among other things, for "ye pound." This pound did not stand on the same spot as the old one; for, in the spring of 1758, Gershom Cambell petitioned the town to give him the site of the old pound for a building-lot; and, on the 20th of March of that year, it was "voted that the town [of] Norton do acquit all the Right they have to that little spot of Land which the pound was built on — which land was formerly Richard Brigg's, late of Norton, Deceased — to Gershom Cambell." Hence it is supposed that Mr. Cambell built his house on this lot. I am informed that an old house once stood on each of the locations I have mentioned; but I am rather of the opinion, that the pound was built on what is now Mr. Sanford's lot. I can find no action of the town, relative to another pound, till June 18, 1770, when it was ordered, "that the present selectmen build a new pound." It is supposed that the selectmen did not obey the instructions they received; or, if they did, the one built did not meet the wants and wishes of the people: for, March 21, 1774, the question of a new pound was before the town; and it was then "voted to build a new pound with

timber, and to be thirty feet square, and to be Erected on the Town's Common, near where the old pound now stands, where the selectmen shall think proper." And it was accordingly built, directly in front of where the Trinitarian Meeting-house now stands, and within the meeting-house yard.

"It was," says Rev. Ebenezer Burt, who was born within a few rods of it, "eight rails high. Mr. Peter Carpenter was Pound-keeper." This stood till 1789; when, as appears from "orders" drawn to pay him therefor, another pound was erected by Gen. Silas Cobb. This was of stone, and stood nearly on the spot where George M. Sweet's house now stands, and was a few rods southerly from Gen. Cobb's house, and he was for many years pound-keeper. It remained there till about twenty years ago, when the present pound was built, agreeably to the will of the town, as expressed Aug. 1, 1837, when it was "voted to have the pound removed to a spot of land near the Gun-House, if it can be done free from expense to the town." Accordingly, it was removed by Capt. Dauphin King, on whose land the old pound stood (he having bought the Cobb Farm), who probably did not wish to have it so near his house, and who therefore gave the land for the new pound in exchange for that on which the old one stood, and was at the expense of its removal. It is now, however, seldom used, and its walls are tumbling down; for we no longer see the swine, ringed or unringed, yoked or unyoked, at large in our streets. The sheep have almost entirely become extinct; and the well-built fences are a pretty sure proof against horses and neat cattle damage-feasant. The briers and brambles are fast appropriating the strong enclosure to their own purposes, even without asking the town, as did Gershom Cambell, for a quitclaim-title to the spot.

LONGEVITY.

We here give a list of those persons who have died here at the age of fourscore or more years. Could

we have obtained a complete record of all the deaths, this list would doubtless have been much larger. In a few instances, the individuals died elsewhere, but, having long been residents of Norton, were brought here for burial.

Year of Death.	Age.	Year of Death.	Age.
1772. Widow Hannah Andrews	89	1845. Thomas Danforth	85
1800. Joseph Andrews	80	1836. Elijah Eddy	83 (?)
1818. Widow Phebe Arnold	82	1835. Wealthy, his wife	84
1851. John Arnold	87	1845. Widow Rachel Eddy ¹ . .	104
1783. Widow Mary Babbitt	80	1829. Abiel Eddy	89
1855. Samuel Balcom	81	1825. Zeruah, his wife	82
1855. Mrs. Abigail Balcom	80	1852. John Eddy	83
1783. William Basset	89	1826. Sarah Fisher	82
1850. Leavit Bates	80	1858. Apollos Francis	87
1850. Widow Peddy Bowen	90	1829. Widow Bethiah Freeman .	84
1833. Thomas Braman	81	1847. John Freeman	81
1837. Benjamin Braman	82	1790. Widow Mary Gilbert . .	91
1838. Anna, his wife	80	1813. Mrs. Rebecca Gilbert . .	84
1842. Sylvanus Braman	88	1811. Widow Mary Godfrey . .	95
1803. Timothy Briggs	90	1831. Widow Mary Godfrey . .	95
1798. Hannah, his wife	80	1847. Francis Guillow	84
1818. Simeon Briggs	89	1840. Phebe, his wife	85
1832. Mary (?), his wife	93	1857. Widow Dilla Hall	90
1832. Mrs. Hannah Briggs	84	1814. Widow Harvey	96
1835. Widow Sarah Briggs	82	1851. Mrs. Lucinda Harvey . .	88
1750. John Briggs	80	1824. Abigail Harridon	91
1850. Hannah Briggs	81	1768. Mrs. Hannah Hodges . . .	84
1850. Mrs. Betsy Briggs	80	1814. Widow Mary Hodges . .	84
1832. William Burt	87	1818. Jarvis Hodges	81
1842. Prudence, his wife	90	1825. Josiah Hodges	84
1856. Mrs. Polly Cahoon	85	1835. Wealthy, his wife	86
1858. William Capen	82	1837. Elijah Hodges	86
1842. Widow Prudence Carpen- ter	82	1840. Isaac Hodges	83
1840. John Carver	92	1842. Benjamin Hodges	91
1856. Mrs. Polly Carver	81	1847. Mrs. Abigail Hodges . .	86
1768. Widow Temperance Clapp .	90	1854. Mrs. Lucy Hodges	80
1778. Widow Bethiah Clapp . . .	82	1832. Mrs. Mary Horton	87
1800. Jonathan Clapp	85	1832. Mrs. Eunice Hunt	89
1807. Jerusha, his wife	93	1854. Mrs. Cynthia Hunt . . .	87
1845. Widow Olive Clapp	90	1845. Josiah King	82
1853. Oliver Clapp	82	1852. Miriam, his wife	87
1789. Widow Mary Cobb	85	1793. Jonathan Knapp	84
1833. Silas Cobb	90	1795. Mehitable, his wife . . .	87
1807. Thomas Commons	93	1832. Daniel Knapp	88
1790. Benjamin Copeland	82	1826. Mary, his wife	81
1801. Sarah, his wife	92	1838. Thomas Knowles	99
1833. Samuel Copeland	82	1855. Jonathan Knowles	81
1839. Widow Abigail Copeland .	83	1800. Ephraim Lane	82
1820. Widow Rachel Crane . . .	89	1826. Ephraim Lane	86
1826. Theophilus Crossman . . .	84	1857. Daniel Lane	86
		1852. Eunice, his wife	81

¹ She died at the Alms-house, and the town voted her a pair of grave-stones on account of her age.

Year of Death.	Age.	Year of Death.	Age.
1767. Widow Mary Larcher	83	1855. John Stanley	82
1778. George Leonard	80	1852. Sally, his wife	88
1783. Rachel, his wife	81	1775. Widow Mehitable Stone	85
1819. George Leonard	90	1835. Nathaniel Stone	82
1827. Experience, his wife	88	1824. Elizabeth Story	92
1829. Widow Rebecca Leonard	83	1851. Thomas Story	93
1773. Jonathan Lincoln	86	1847. Anna, his wife	82
1808. Abigail Lincoln	88	1849. Seth Sumner	85
1822. David Lincoln	95	1856. Ruth, his wife	87
1828. Benjamin Lincoln	87	1858. Widow Anna Sweet	83
1832. David Lincoln	81	1822. Ebenezer Titus	81
1833. Jemima, his wife	87	1830. Mehitable, his wife	89
1843. Mrs. Anna Lincoln	81	1789. Widow Margaret Trow	86
1850. Moses Lincoln	82	1797. Henry Tucker	88
1848. Luther Lincoln	82	1793. Judith, his wife	86
1853. Mrs. Rachel Lincoln	82	1853. Hannah Tucker	81
1843. Solomon Lothrop	82	1816. Mrs. Abigail Verry	86
1822. William Makepeace	84	1789. Mrs. Bethiah Washburn	84
1824. Ruth, his wife	82	1824. Meletiah Washburn	90
1787. John Martin	80	1825. Mary (?), his wife	83
1780. George Morey	83	1778. Simeon Wetherell	85
1853. Mrs. Sarah Morey	88	1823. William Wetherell	83
1842. John L. Munroe	87	1826. Widow Lydia Wetherell	91
1849. Polly Munroe	80	1837. James Wetherell	82
1812. Widow Mary Newcomb	83	1851. Miss Lydia Wetherell	82
1829. Joseph Newcomb	82	1846. Laban Wheaton	92
1852. Richard Newcomb	86	1849. Fanny, his wife	84
1840. Jonathan Newland	88	1856. Widow Roby Wheeler	95
1828. Ichabod Perry	80	1801. Abraham White	84
1836. Nathan Perry	86	1824. Josiah White	83
1832. Widow Abigail Puffer	98	1827. Daniel White	84
1857. Widow Polly Shaw	96	1835. Zebulon White	84
1796. Mrs. Elizabeth Smith	96	1776. John Wild	84
1807. David Smith	81	1803. Widow Elizabeth Williams . . .	93
1818. Timothy Smith	89	1813. Noah Wiswall	86
1818. Mary, his wife	83	1782. Israel Woodward	84
1844. Arannah Smith	80	1816. Anna Woodward	85
1845. Abisha Smith	84	1826. Elizabeth Woodward	85
1856. Daniel Smith	87	1840 (?). Martha Woodward	84
1857. Ebenezer Smith	82		

FATAL CASUALTIES.

The first accidental death in town, of which we have any account, was that of Joseph Williams, aged thirty-one, who fell from the scaffolding of a new barn upon which he was at work, Nov. 7, 1744, and was so much injured that he died on the evening following.

Daniel Braman, aged thirty-nine, died Nov. 1, 1758, from injuries received a few days previous in a cider-mill.

Ephraim Hodges, aged about forty, was drowned, while on a whaling voyage, about 1768.

A Miss (?) Gary, an insane woman, disappeared in the autumn of the year 1782 (?), and is supposed to have died from exposure. The next spring, her body was found by some children, between some large rocks now partly in the Barrowsville Mill-pond, on the northerly side. From this circumstance, they were called the "Gary Rocks."

Charles W. Wetherell, aged nine years, died March 14, 1784, from injuries received by a fall on the ice while skating a short time previous.

Elijah Wetherell fell through the floor of a sawmill (near Augustus Lane's) into the pit below, and, from the injuries received, died March 23, 1786, aged forty-seven.

Seth Gilbert, aged sixty-two, was run over by an ox-cart, and died Oct. 3, 1788, a few days after the accident.

William Newcomb was burnt to death in his house, March 17, 1790, aged sixty-eight.

About 1798, a child of Laban Smith was scalded to death.

Lydia Burt, while reading the Bible, in December, 1802, was taken in a fit, and fell into the fire, and was so badly burned that she soon died.

Simeon Allen fell from the high beams of a barn in September, 1809, and soon died from the effects of the fall.

George Godfrey was killed in a cider-mill, Oct. 15, 1810.

About the year 1811, in the summer season, Watson Morey (a colored man) was drowned in the Barrowsville Mill-pond.

Ephraim, son of Holmes Richmond, aged about three years, was burnt to death about the year 1817.

Amherst Guild, of this town, was choked to death, while eating on the muster-field at Attleborough, Oct. 11, 1822, aged about thirty-eight.

Peter Gillet, while bathing near the "Gary Rocks," in the Barrowsville Mill-pond, was drowned July 11, 1823.

Asa, child of David Woodward, aged four years, was killed by the falling of the wall upon it, Sept. 6, 1825.

Rebecca, daughter of Josiah Macomber, aged about five years, fell into a tub of hot water, and was so badly scalded that she died March 31, 1827, about twenty-four hours after the accident.

Thomas Sweet, of this town (the scaffolding giving way), fell from a factory on which he was at work, in Smithfield, R.I., and died Aug. 23, 1828, a few hours after the catastrophe.

Asahel Dean, of Norton, while riding in the town of Bellingham, was thrown from his carriage, and killed, June 10, 1829.

Daniel Goodwin fell from a load of hay, and was so badly hurt that he died July 13, 1830, a few days after the fall.

Nason White was choked to death while eating his dinner, Jan. 17, 1832, aged thirty-two.

Thomas Braman died April 29, 1833, from injuries received a few weeks previous by falling from a ladder in his barn.

Lloyd S. Lincoln, aged thirty-one, was thrown from his wagon, and killed, Jan. 24, 1834, aged twenty-three.

Simeon Lane was struck by lightning, and instantly killed, July 14, 1835, while driving his team with a load of hay from the field. One of the oxen was also killed.

Laban Arnold was fatally injured by the premature explosion of a rock he was blasting, and died Sept. 16, 1837, about twenty-four hours after the accident.

John Freeman is supposed to have been frozen to death in the westerly part of the town, Jan. 29, 1841, aged forty-five.

David L. Carver, of this town, was instantly killed on the Stoughton Railroad, by the accidental "dumping" of a loaded dirt-car while he was under it, March 13, 1845, aged thirty-six.

David Berry, while bathing, was drowned in the Copper-works Pond, June 28, 1845, aged about twenty-five.

William Baylies Arnold, aged about eight years, was drowned July 5, 1847, in Burt's Brook, a short distance above Lincoln's Furnace.

Luther Lincoln died March 31, 1848, from injuries received by being thrown from his carriage upon the sidewalk at Taunton about two weeks previously.

Horace M. Leonard, while returning from Taunton, Nov. 28, 1848, fell from a loaded wagon, which passed over him, killing him instantly.

Marietta, aged thirteen months, daughter of Charles D. Lane, died April 10, 1851, in consequence of turning a teapot full of hot water upon her face and breast about three weeks previously.

Daniel O., aged ten years, son of Lysander O. Makepeace, was drowned July 26, 1851, in Rumford River, back of his father's house.

Seth Hodges was found dead in his barn, Nov. 17, 1851; and is supposed to have fallen from the high scaffold.

David Chapman, of Easton, while skating within the limits of Norton, in the winter of 1854, was drowned.

David, aged eighteen months, child of Edward Keefe, died March 19, 1855, from the effects of burns received by his clothes taking fire.

Harriet M. Stanley (daughter of Benjamin D. Stanley), who was, with her brother, burning brush near the Barrowsville Millpond, May 10, 1855, accidentally set her clothes on fire, and was so shockingly burned that she died in two or three hours.

Mrs. Mercy Ann, wife of Cyril S. Sweet, while preparing breakfast, Oct. 30, 1855, by some means set her clothes on fire, and survived the accident less than twenty-four hours.

Faugas, aged about six years, son of Thomas McCaffrey, was drowned in the canal at the Copper-works, Sept. 28, 1856.

David, son of Edward Keefe, aged two years, was run over by the cars (which were out of time), and

instantly killed, a short distance above the depot, Oct. 13, 1857.

John, aged twenty-one months, son of Michael Marley, was drowned in the canal at the Copper-works, July 26, 1858.

DWELLING-HOUSES BURNED.

The first account of the burning of a house in Norton, which we find, is in the "Boston News-Letter" of Thursday, Feb. 9, 1738; from which it appears, that, on the Tuesday previous, George Hodges' house was burnt down. The fire was caused by sparks falling upon the roof, there being a high wind at the time.

Peter Makepeace's house was burned April 19, 1775. About 1780, a house belonging to Nathaniel Freeman was destroyed. William Newcomb's house was consumed, and he also was burned in it, March 17, 1790.¹ Not far from 1790, Ann Cobb's house was burnt. April 12, 1803, a house belonging to Asahel Tucker, occupied by Levi Woodward. Jan. 21, 1806, the house of Peter Penno, at mid-day. About 1812, William Verry's house. In March, 1819, a house owned by Judge Leonard, and occupied by Oliver Hunt. May 10, 1828, Deacon Lysander Makepeace's house. About 1835, a house belonging to Judge Wheaton. April 28, 1838, Clifford Carver's house. Dec. 19, 1841, the public-house kept by Hiram Smith, and owned by Horace B. and Hiram H. Wetherell. April 15, 1846, the house of Jacob Shepard. March 21, 1847, a house belonging to the Crocker Brothers, and occupied by James Lynch. About 1849, a house belonging to Sibyl Burt, and occupied by James Washburn. June 6, 1852, the "Wiswall House," so called, occupied by Irish families. May 18, 1857, the house belonging to D. and S. Holman, and occupied by Oliver S. Titus. June 15, 1857, the house of Lewis E. and Nancy Lincoln.

¹ For full account, see Herald of Freedom, March 26, 1790; and the Massachusetts Spy of April 1, 1790.

BUILDINGS BURNED.

Dec. 3, 1741, "The Forge and Works for the manufacture of Iron, at Norton, belonging to George Leonard, Esq., were burnt down: the damage is supposed to be about One Thousand Pounds."¹ In 1778, John Briggs's barn was burnt. Elisha Cobb's nail-shop, in 1789. In 1797, James Wetherell's barn was struck with lightning, and consumed. About 1808, Daniel Smith's nail-mill. Samuel Balcom's nail-shop, in 1816. James Godfrey's sawmill, in 1820. About the same year, Benj. Horton's cutting-mill. Ephraim Allen's barn was struck with lightning in 1822, and consumed. In 1824, the rolling and slitting mill of Benj. Horton. December, 1831, Nathaniel Newcomb's factory. About 1835, a store belonging to Judge Wheaton. Henry Blandin's barn, in 1836. Stillman Smith's shop, January, 1840. In the spring of 1842 (?), the shingle, grist, and wadding mills at Barrowsville. Thomas Story's barn, in 1844. In December, 1844, John McCormack's barn. Hathaway Leonard's carpenter's shop, in the spring of 1852. March 14, 1854, the schoolhouse in District No. 5. The blacksmith's shop at the Copper-works, July 1, 1856. A portion of Lincoln's Furnace, April 9, 1859.

RUNAWAY WIFE.

In the "Boston News-Letter" of March 1, 1750, is the following advertisement:—

"Feb. 15, 1749-50.—Whereas *Rebecca Harris*, the wife of me the Subscriber, living at Norton, has unlawfully absented herself from me and my family, and carried off sundry Effects to a considerable value, and may endeavour to run me in Debt, — These are, therefore, to caution all Persons whatsoever not to entertain, trust, or give Credit to her, the said Rebecca, upon my Account; for I will not pay any Debt contracted by her during her continuing to absent herself. — As witness my Hand,

"JOSEPH HARRIS.

"N.B. — If she will return to my Family, and behave as a virtuous wife ought to do, she shall be kindly received."

¹ Boston News-Letter, Dec. 10, 1741.

WITCHCRAFT.

Norton has not been exempt from believers in witches, wizards, ghosts, and goblins; and there are some yet living who hug these ideas to their bosoms. Tradition has handed down to us the important intelligence (we do not, however, vouch for its truth), that Major George Leonard — the first of the name in town — made a league with the Devil in order to acquire great wealth; and, as a return for the services rendered, Leonard promised to give his body to the Devil when he called for it. Accordingly, in 1716, while Mr. Leonard was sick with a fever, of which he died, the old imp came, claimed his body, and actually carried it off! As he left the premises with it, he made a tremendous jump, and landed on some rocks situated thirty or forty rods back of the house, where he came down with so much force as to make his foot-prints in the rock, which are to be seen at the present day! At the funeral, the corpse was not to be seen, of course; and the family gave out word that it was not proper to be seen: but, in reality, there was nothing in the coffin but a log of wood, put in to lull all suspicion that the body was not there.

Theodora, or Dora Leonard, as she was generally called, was reputed a witch, and, if we can believe the stories of some now living, “cut some curious capers.” People would sometimes go to the barn, and “tie up” the cattle; and, before they could get away therefrom, the cattle would be all unloosed by some mysterious agency. She lived some two miles from the centre; and once, when up in town, it was needful that she should get some cloth that was left at home, and she went after it, but soon returned with it, not having had time to have gone a fourth part of the distance. One day, some boys were out hunting squirrels, near her residence; and they found a large one in the top of a tree, and fired almost numberless times at it, but could not kill it. But, as they were going home, they encountered a strange cat, which was believed to have been Dora in disguise, who had prevented the

charges fired at the squirrel from taking effect. She was supported by the town in her last days; and, when she died (about 1785), there was such a terrible racket all about the house, that no one dared to remain to witness her death.

Ann Cobb had the reputation of dealing in the "black art," and of being in league with the "Old Scratch;" but I have not been informed of any specific modes in which she manifested her power. She was supported by the town some time previous to her death, which took place in 1798.

Naomi Burt was also accounted a member of the mysterious sisterhood of witches, and, by her wonderful powers, gave some trouble to those who fell under the ban of her displeasure. Oxen sometimes turned their yokes, and people lost wheels off their wagons, when they passed her house; and the boys always held their breath, and ran with all speed, when they went by in the night. She hung herself, July 4, 1808.

SINGULAR PHENOMENA.

Some eighty or ninety years ago, three young persons, living near each other, were all very singularly affected, during the same night, with a sudden attack somewhat of the paralytic kind. Josiah Harvey almost entirely lost the use of one of his limbs, so that he ever after walked with great difficulty. Henry Hewit lost the use of both limbs, so that he never walked again, but pushed himself round in a chair upon wheels. Prudy Hall, a little child, was so affected in one of her arms that she could never afterwards raise it to her head. No satisfactory explanation was given to this wonderful occurrence, except the prevailing idea of the people of that time, who said these individuals were "moon-struck."

SHAKERS.

In 1782, some Shakers, with Ann Lee (the elect lady) and Shadrack Ireland as leaders, came to this

town from Harvard, whence they were driven through fear of a mob. They made some proselytes here, but soon removed to Rehoboth, and prevailed upon many of their adherents, both here and there, to sell their estates, in order to build a ship or ark to carry them to the "New Jerusalem" of their visions. A vessel was built with the money thus furnished; but it was sent on a voyage (says Backus in his "Church History," vol. iii. p. 179, &c.) to the West Indies, from whence a rich cargo was brought: but both vessel and cargo were sold, and a few rich men cheated the rest out of their estates. Some of the Norton Shakers are believed to have removed to New Lebanon, N.Y. The principal place of their meetings at Norton was at the house of Capt. William Morey, a blacksmith, — less than half a mile from the Centre Village, on the Attleborough Road.¹ It is now known as the "Jackson House," and is occupied by David Fitzgerald.

FREEMASONS.

The Bristol Lodge of Freemasons was organized in Norton, June 14, Anno Lucis 5797. The charter was granted to the following persons: Job Gilbert, George Gilbert, Ira Smith, Joshua Pond, Samuel Morey, jun., Timothy Briggs, jun., Samuel Day,² Seth Smith, jun., Daniel Gilbert,² Benjamin Billings.² They held their meetings in the hall of the Academy Building, now owned by Benjamin H. Richmond. I am told that the records of this lodge are destroyed or lost; and hence we know not who, or how many, were the subsequent members. March 10, A.L. 5830, the lodge was removed to Attleborough.

¹ For a description of a Shaker meeting, see "Men and Times of the Revolution, or Memoirs of Elkanah Watson," p. 332, &c. In the same book, p. 304, &c., is an account of Watson's first interview with his subsequent wife, — who was Rachel Smith, of this town. In his journal, Watson says, "In a few weeks after this interview [in 1784], the young lady became my beloved wife." This is not correct. They were not married till more than four years afterwards. But, if he had said they *ought* to have been married "a few weeks after this interview," he would have stated the truth.

² Belonged to Mansfield.

LIBRARIES.

Rev. Pitt Clarke says a social library was founded Jan. 4, 1794; and, in 1825, it numbered two hundred and seventy-eight volumes. The constitution of the association, called the "Proprietors of the Norton Library," is dated Jan. 29, 1794; and there were thirty-six original members, of whom only two are now known to be living, — viz., Elijah Lane, of Enfield, and our venerable townsman, David Makepeace, — both over ninety years of age. Each of the proprietors was to pay down six shillings; six shillings in August following; six in August, 1795; and six more in August, 1796, — in all, twenty-four shillings: and this sum entitled them to a right in the library. Thereafter, each proprietor was to pay annually one shilling and sixpence till otherwise ordered by a vote of the shareholders. Each person could take out as many books at a time as he owned rights in the library. Five directors and a librarian were to be chosen by ballot, annually, on the first Monday of September. The first election of officers took place at the house of Gen. Silas Cobb, Feb. 19, 1794; of which meeting he was moderator. Rev. Pitt Clarke was chosen librarian; and Hon. George Leonard, Rev. Ebenezer Nelson, Gen. Silas Cobb, Dr. Samuel Morey, and Ephraim Raymond, directors. The last and nineteenth article of the constitution declared that the library should remain to the proprietors, their heirs and assigns, for ever. But, Sept. 3, 1836, — the last annual meeting ever held, — the nineteenth article was rescinded; and it was decided that a majority of the members might vote to sell the books and property "for the benefit of all the proprietors, and dissolve the Institution." Deacon Daniel Lane was chosen librarian at that meeting, and, according to the constitution, remained in office till he died; the books being kept at his house. The first proprietors belonged to Norton. Subsequently, members were admitted from Mansfield. We recently met the only resident sur-

vivor of the original proprietors; and the great question with him was, what should be done with the library, which is still at the late residence of Deacon Lane, now occupied by his son Albert.

In 1842, the State appropriated fifteen dollars to every school district that would raise a like sum for a district-school library. In accordance with this resolve, several of the school districts in Norton raised the needed sum, and established libraries, which are still in existence, though not very much used. During the ministry of Rev. Mr. Hinkley, quite a number of books were bought, and a *social library* started; but it died with his removal from town. Jan. 1, 1852, the ladies of the Congregational parish held a "tea-party;" most of the proceeds of which were used to establish a parish library. Some additions have been made to it, and it now numbers two hundred and thirty-five volumes; and the use of it is free to any and all the worshippers with that parish.

TOWN-MAP.

In accordance with a resolve of the General Court, passed March 1, 1830, requiring the several towns of the State to make a survey of their territory, a survey was made of this town by Cromwell Leonard, Esq., and a map lithographed; only a few copies of which are now in existence. In 1855, a new map was lithographed by H. F. Walling, superintendent of the State Map, in obedience to a vote of the town; and each family was furnished with a copy. The map is a pretty correct one; giving the location of the rivers, roads, and all the dwelling-houses in town, with the names of their owners; but would have been more valuable, in an historic point of view, if the names of the occupants of the houses had also been given. A few copies of this map, thirty-six inches by thirty, well mounted, are for sale at the office of the Town Treasurer.

STATISTICS.

Rev. Pitt Clarke, in his "Historical Sermon," says that, between July 3, 1793, and July 3, 1825, there had been five hundred and eighty-seven deaths in Norton; of which five were suicides, nine accidental, and nineteen sudden. He also states, that, within that period, he had solemnized two hundred and twenty-two marriages. Mr. Clarke kept a record of the names and ages of all who died during his ministry; but that record-book cannot now be found among the papers he left. His widow thinks she lent it, after leaving town, to some one here; and is confident it must be in Norton. We trust all parties will make a thorough search for it; for, if found, it will supply many deficiencies that now exist on the town-records of deaths, &c. Until about 1848, there was not an accurate account of births, marriages, and deaths, kept in the town-clerk's office. For the last ten years, ending Dec. 31, 1858, there have been four hundred and thirty-two births; the largest number (fifty-three) being in 1857, the smallest number (thirty-five) in 1853. For the same period, there has been ninety marriages; the largest number (thirteen) being in 1853, the smallest number (three) in 1849. The deaths, for the same time, were three hundred and seventy; the largest number (thirty-four) being in 1849, the smallest number (nineteen) in 1857. There have been three suicides since 1825.

SUSPICIONS OF MURDER, ETC.

About the year 1761, Joseph Hart and wife, for some trifling offence, tied up his son (by a former wife) by the wrists to a joist over head, stripped him of his clothes, and whipped him almost to death. He lived some days: and, when the father found he was likely to die, he went for a physician in great haste; but death soon closed the poor boy's sufferings.¹

¹ A long list of verses were made relative to the matter, copies of which are still extant.

A woman by the name of Hodges was suspected of having caused the death of her illegitimate child ; but her guilt was never fully established.

In 1772, an illegitimate child of a maid-servant in the family of William Holmes was found dead in a hogshead of rye, in the garret, which, she said, was put there by a negro, who was the reputed father of it. There were suspicions of murder ; but the jury of inquest said, "It died from neglect."¹

CHAISE AND CHAIRS.

In 1753, there were taxed in Norton one chaise and four chairs. The chaise is supposed to have belonged to the Leonard Family. The chairs were a kind of gig, having a seat suitable for two persons, with a sort of chair-back.

POST-OFFICE.

About 1798, a post office was established in Easton, on the Bay Road, leading from Taunton, through the easterly part of Norton, to Boston ; and was designed to accommodate the citizens of Easton, Norton, and Mansfield. Some of the people in the west part of this town, however, went to Attleborough for post-office accommodations. The post-office was established in Norton about the year 1817, Earl P. White being the first postmaster, and holding the office about one year ; which was kept most of the time at his house, in the easterly part of the village. Laban M. Wheaton, Esq., succeeded Mr. White as postmaster, and was commissioned April 21, 1818 ; holding the office till 1845. It was kept for some years in Mr. Wheaton's law-office ; then in the public-house and in the village store. On the 24th of June, 1845, Earl Hodges, Esq., received the appointment of postmaster, and held the office till his death, April 3, 1857. He kept the office most of the time in his

¹ Boston Gazette, May 18, 1772.

house, directly opposite the Town Hall. His widow (Mrs. Harriet Hodges) was appointed postmistress, April 6, 1857; and is still in office.

The mail was first brought to town about once a week from Taunton on horseback, and for several years came in that manner. Subsequently, a line of stages was established through this town from Taunton to Providence, and afterwards to Wrentham and Mendon, and brought the mail two or three times a week previous to the opening of the railroad. The mail is now daily received in the morning by railroad from Boston, and is sent to Boston in the afternoon. The New-York mail goes out in the morning *viâ* Taunton, and is returned at night.

RAILROAD.

The Taunton-Branch Railroad — extending in a straight line, about a mile easterly of Norton Centre from the Boston and Providence Railroad in Mansfield to Taunton — was built during the years 1835 and 1836, and was opened for travel in August of the latter year. Elkanah Wood was the first station-agent; and the stopping-place was, for several years, at the crossing near his house, there being no depot. The first depot was built near Mr. Wood's house, and was afterwards removed to a position between the present depot and the road, and a few feet nearer to the railroad-track. The new depot was erected in 1853, and was occupied for the first time during the severe snow-storm which commenced on the 29th of December of that year, and continued two days, completely blocking up the roads, and stopping the cars in their progress. The present station-agent is Mr. Eli Wood, who has held the office for many years. Some years ago, a flag-station was established near Taunton line, a short distance easterly of Daniel Crane's house; and he was appointed, and still performs the duties of, station-agent. I am told, that, when the surveys were made for this road, a proposition was made by the

company to Judge Wheaton, that, if he would subscribe liberally to the stock of the road, it should be located through the village, near his house. But he, fearing it would depreciate the value of his property, declined the proposal; and hence the road passes by on one side of us. Soon after the completion of the Taunton-Branch Railroad to Taunton, it was continued to New Bedford; and the passenger-cars now run three times a day through town each way between that city and Boston.

ACADEMY.

About 1797, a building was erected directly back of the Congregational-Parish Meeting-house by shareholders, and an academy soon afterwards opened in the lower part of it, under the charge of Abner Alden, Esq., who is believed to have been the only principal. The building was dedicated with appropriate services; Rev. John Foster, of Taunton, giving the address. For some reason, it failed to meet the expectations of its founders, and did not have a long life. The removal of Mr. Alden to Bristol, R.I., might have been one cause which lead to the breaking-up of the school. It is believed to have been quite popular while he was connected with it.

WHEATON FEMALE SEMINARY.

This institution was founded by Hon. Laban Wheaton, of this town, soon after the death of his daughter (Mrs. Strong), who died childless. With the portion of his estate designed for her, he endowed the school. The first seminary building was erected in the summer of 1834, and the school was opened in the spring of 1835. The following trustees, in addition to himself, were appointed by Judge Wheaton: Rev. Sylvester Holmes, Rev. Orin Fowler, Rev. Erastus Maltby, Rev. Cyrus W. Allen, Lemuel Perry, Esq., Deacon William Reed, Major Jonathan Bliss, and L. M. Wheaton, Esq. We here record the names of those who have since

been elected trustees to supply vacancies in the Board : Dr. Ira Barrows, Albert Barrows, Esq., Rev. William Barrows, William J. King, Esq., Zeno Kelly, Esq., Rev. Leonard Swain, Rev. Franklin Holmes, Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. M. Blake, Ichabod Washburn, Esq., Rev. A. H. Clapp, William C. Chapin, Esq., John R. Rogerson, Esq. March 10, 1837, the school was incorporated by the Legislature under the name of the "Norton Female Seminary," with the privilege of holding real and personal estate to the amount of ten thousand dollars each. March 16, 1839, the name was changed by the Legislature to "Wheaton Female Seminary," and authorized to hold additional real and personal estate to the value of twenty thousand dollars each. In 1849, the first structure was removed, and the present Seminary Building erected at a cost of about six thousand dollars, which was dedicated in December of that year ; Rev. Henry N. Hudson giving the address. The first boarding-house was erected in 1836 ; and, subsequently, two wings were added. The new boarding-house — connected with the old one by a narrow passage-way, after the fashion of the Siamese Twins (though the two do not resemble each other quite so closely as do Chang and Eng) — was built in 1856, and opened, with appropriate services, Nov. 5 of that year ; Rev. Samuel Walcott, of Providence, R.I., giving the address.

Miss Eunice Caldwell was the first principal, and she was assisted at the opening of the school by the celebrated Miss Mary Lyon. Miss Caldwell remained as principal till 1838 (?). The following ladies have been principals of the school since Miss Caldwell left : Miss Eliza R. Knight, from 1838 to 1840 ; Miss Martha E. W. Vose, from 1840 to 1842 ; Miss Martha C. Sawyer, from 1842 to 1847 (?) ; Miss Elizabeth A. Cate, from 1847 to 1849 ; Miss Margaret Mann, from 1849 to 1850 ; Mrs. Caroline C. Metcalf, from 1850 to the present time.

CONGREGATIONAL-PARISH SUNDAY SCHOOL.

This was organized about the year 1815. For a year or two, Miss Abigail Parker is believed to have had the charge of it. She was succeeded by Mr. Alvin Perry as superintendent; and, for some years subsequently, the school met, between the morning and afternoon services on Sunday, at the schoolhouse. It was one of the earliest Sunday schools established in Massachusetts. It has usually been held only in the warm season; viz., from the first part of May to the latter part of November. In 1816, "The Norton Female Christian Association" was formed, with a view "to procure and loan religious books, and promote other Christian and holy purposes;" and, in 1818, numbered one hundred members, all ladies.¹ The managers of this association soon became teachers of the Sunday school; and, in the course of a few years, the school received their chief attention; the books previously bought being made the basis of the Sunday-school library. June 1, 1831, the society was re-organized under the name of the "Sunday-school Society;" which name it has borne most of the time since up to 1858, and has usually made choice of the superintendent and librarians, purchased all needed text and library books, &c. The following persons have been superintendents of the school since 1831. I can find no records back of that time. Cromwell Leonard, Deacon Almond Tucker, Jarvis Smith, Leonard Hodges, Augustus Lane, Zebulon P. White, Deacon Stillman Smith, Earl C. White. The school now numbers one hundred and forty pupils, and the library contains six hundred and nine volumes.

TOWN-HOUSE.

As we have previously stated, the town-meetings were held for many years in the old meeting-house. At

¹ For names of members, see appendix to printed sermon preached before the association, in 1818, by Rev. Pitt Clarke.

the March meeting, 1836, the question of building a town-house, or buying some building for that purpose, came up for consideration, and a committee was chosen to report upon the matter; and at an adjourned meeting, March 21, it was voted to build a town-house. This vote was reconsidered March 26, and a committee was chosen to buy the old meeting-house for the use of the town, who forthwith made the purchase, paying two hundred and twenty-five dollars for it. Soon after, it was fitted up by dividing it horizontally, and appropriating the upper part for a town-hall. The lower part was partitioned off into several rooms, and used for a paint-shop, basket-making, &c. The steeple — which was built at the end and outside of the body of the house — was taken down by digging under the foundation and severing its connection with the main building, and then tipping it over. Just as the separation was completed, Dr. Asa M. Adams ran into it; and, while attempting to ascend the stairs leading to the gallery, the steeple fell to the ground, without doing him any particular harm. Having fitted up the house for their use, the town were not satisfied with it; and two or three unsuccessful attempts were made to sell the building, and build anew. April 3, 1843, sixty-four persons voted in favor of, and sixty-six against, disposing of the town-house. This vote was reconsidered Sept. 4 by a vote of one hundred and twenty-five to ninety-eight; and it was then voted, one hundred and twenty-eight to one hundred and eight, to build a new town-house, forty feet by thirty, provided it should not cost more than three hundred and fifty dollars, including the land to set it on, — the old house being “thrown in.” And, in accordance with this vote, the present town-house was built; the old meeting-house being taken down, and a portion of it incorporated into the new building.

EARLY METHODIST PREACHING.

Since writing the chapter relative to the Wesleyan-Methodist Church, I have learned a few facts about the first preaching of the Methodist doctrines here, which may be of interest. One of the first Methodist preachers in this vicinity was Lemuel Smith, about 1790. In 1795, Zadock Priest was appointed to the "Warren Circuit," — which included Norton, — and preached here about once a month for about one year, holding his meetings some of the time at Joseph Newcomb's, whose house, for many years, was a sort of headquarters for Methodist ministers. The first week in June, 1796, Mr. Priest came to Newcomb's, sick with consumption, and died there on the 22d of the same month, in the twenty-seventh year of his age. He is said to have been a native of Connecticut. He was the first Methodist minister who died in Massachusetts, and the first tenant of the private burying-ground near Josiah Newcomb's, who lives where Priest died. At the time of Priest's death, it was contemplated by Joseph Newcomb and others to build a Methodist meeting-house near the spot where he was buried; but, from some cause, the house was built at East Mansfield. The first regular camp-meeting, east of Connecticut River, was in Norton, June, 1805, near Joseph Newcomb's house, in a grove (now cut down, and growing up to pines) directly back of Perez Foster's house. The celebrated Lorenzo Dow and eleven other preachers were present. It rained a portion of the time. The rumsellers, who thronged the ground, were vigorously attacked by Dow; and, in return, they threatened to mob him. Alluding to this matter in his journal, p. 235, Dow says, —

"This being about a mile from the place where I *first* attempted to preach, I related a dream to brother P.; who replied, that he thought some trials were near me, but, by the blessing of God, I might escape: which, in fact, proved to be

the case ; for Satan's emissaries set up their grog-tents, which cost them dearly. For, first after that they would not hearken to reason, I showed the impropriety of corrupting the meeting, and warned the people against them, and also laid a foundation whereby they might be prosecuted ; in consequence of which, they were alarmed, sunk into contempt, and did not sell a sufficiency to indemnify them for their expenses. This so exasperated them, that they fell on different plans to be revenged, either by provoking me to say something that would expose me to the law, or else get an opportunity to give me a flogging. However, God defeated their designs, and turned their treacherous intentions to the disgrace of their characters ; so that they appeared as ciphers in the eyes of a generous public. . . . The Lord was wonderfully present with his spirit to acknowledge the meeting ; for, whilst P. was preaching, numbers fell, as if the powers of *unbelief* gave away. The cry became so general, that he was constrained to give over ; but the work continued. The full result of ~~this~~ meeting will not be known until eternity."

The meeting broke up on the 10th of June ; but when it commenced, we are not informed. Dow, on the 3d of June, 1796, preached his first sermon (alluded to in the extract given from his journal) near where Dwelly Goward lives, in Easton. Another camp-meeting was held a few years later on the same ground, which also proved to be a "rainy season."

A D D I T I O N.

After most of these pages were printed, so that it could not be inserted in its proper place, I found some matter relating to the incorporation of the town, which we now record : —

“ THE PETITION OF THE NORTH PRECINCT.

“ To the Inhabitants of Taunton old Township.

“ The petition of the Inhabitants of Taunton North precinct humbly sheweth, that whereas the General Court hath set of part of the north purchase, and part of the old Town of Taunton, to be a precinct to maintaine the ministry, — we now humbly pray the inhabitants of Taunton old Town to Grant that the said precinct may be made a Township, which, we think, will be best both for ourselves and the old Town ; which if you will do, we shall account ourselves much obleeged to you, and shall nextly apply ourselves to the Generall Court to Confirm the same. all which is the Request of your humble petitioners,

“ Dated in TAUNTON NORTH PRECINCT, this first day of Jany., 1710.

“ GEORGE LEONARD,
JOHN WETHERELL,
SAMUEL BRINTNELL,
THOMAS STEPHENS,

“ Agents for, and in the behalfe of, the inhabitants of the North Precinct.”

“ The abovesaid petition was Read, and voated on, the second day of January, 1710, at a Legall Town-Meeting of the Inhabitants of said Taunton old Town.

“ A true Coppy ; Transcribed by me,

“ JOHN WILBORE, Town-Clerk.¹

“ TAUNTON, february the 12th, 1710-11.”

¹ State Papers, vol. cxiii. p. 292.

“To his Excellency Joseph Dudley, Esqr., &c.

“This, the humble petition of the Inhabitants of Taunton north precinct, humbly sheweth, that whereas This Great & General Court, In answer to our prayers, hath alredy sett of a part of Taunton old Township & part of Taunton north purchase to be a seperate precenct for the settling and suport of the ministree in said place, for which we doo Return our harty thanks unto this honered court; and we have allso Erected a meeting-house in said precinct at said place whare the comitee Apointed by the Generall court to view said precinct & bound it, — viz., Col. Thomas, Col. Byfield, & Capt. Warren, apointed. said meeting-house is covered & Inclosed, and in a considarable forwardness. We have also made choise of a Learned & pious person to settle with us in that sacred Imploy of the ministree, — viz., Mr. Joseph Avery, — and are in hopes he will accept, & settle with us. But, said precinct being part of Taunton old town and part of the north purchase, we foresee many Inconveniencyes Likely to arise, and alredy risen; for those belonging to the old town being rated to town-rates, and those in the north purchase not, doth cause a difference amongst us. And, when any poor or Indigent person doth come to reside amongst us in that part which is the north purchase, we are at a loss what to do with them; not having power amongst ourselves to warn them away, or to Give order to a Constable to carry them back to the place from whence they came. And several other inconviencyes, to many to numerate. we did, therefore, on the third day of January Last past, at a town-meeting of the town of Taunton, Adress said town with a petetion, desireing them to Grant that we might be made a township; which petition was read to the town, and they did very Redyly vote that said north precinct shoold be made a township, as may be seen by our petetion, and the vote of the Town upon it. we do, therefore, nextly applye ourselves to this honered court; humbly praying that this court woold confrm the act of the town, And Grant that the bounds that the abovesaid commitee apointed to be the bounds of said precinct may now be the bounds of Said Town, without exceptions, which is as folloeth. [We omit the bounds, they being the same as given on pp. 35 and 36.] And further pray, That the Honble. Court would please to Encourage us in our begining by Granting us some immunity or Exemption, as has usually been done at the first raising of

new Towns, which is a General benefit and advantage to the Province. your Petrs. shall most thankfully acknowledge the same,

“And, as in duty bound, ever pray, &c.

“GEORGE LEONARD,

“By appointment of the Inhabitants.”¹

Then, under the date of March 17, 1710–11, follows the action of the General Court, similar to what we have recorded on page 34.

Here I must stop, not because I have exhausted all the interesting material on hand, but because I must stop somewhere; because I have considerably overrun my limits; above all, because “my poverty, but not my will, consents.” In closing, I feel the full force of the lines, —

“Like travellers, when they see their native soil,
Writers rejoice to terminate their toil.”

¹ State Papers, vol. cxiii. p. 290.

THE END.

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